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THE
FIRST RESURRECTION

REV^d ROBERT NOBLE.



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THE
FIRST RESURRECTION:

BEING

COMMENTS

ON

FIRST CORINTHIANS, CHAP. XV.

BY

THE REV. ROBERT NOBLE, A.M.,

VICAR OF ATHBOY, DIOCESE OF MEATH.



"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection : on such
the second death hath no power."—REV. XX. 6.

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DEDICATION.

To her who taught my infant lips to pray to my Father and my God: to her who watched over the waywardness of youth, ever anxious to direct my reading into useful channels of information, and to teach me to remember my Creator in the days of my youth: to her whose excellent Christian counsel I now so dearly prize, and who is blessed with retaining her intellect and all mental and physical powers unimpaired till her eighty-fifth year; while, during the long course of her life, she has ever adorned the doctrine of God her Saviour in all things, and proved the truth of the statement—"the path of the just is as a shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day;" to my ever dear, kind, Christian Mother, these pages are inscribed by her dutiful son,

THE AUTHOR.

January, 1854.

P R E F A C E.

THESE pages were written at long intervals during the laborious duties which are incident to a clergyman in a large parish with a scattered population.

As regards the greater part, I obeyed the advice—"Keep your piece nine years"—not with any intention of altering it, but simply because I had not time to finish it. This will account, perhaps, for some repetition of ideas, as I had time to forget the first part, before I wrote the last.

Being entirely unaccustomed to write for the press, I would apologise for inaccuracies of style. I admit my full responsibility, however, for the doctrines contained in this Volume. They are the cherished convictions of my heart, strengthened by several years of thoughtfulness and prayer, and by comparison with the Word of God.

Vicarage, Athboy, Jan. 1854.

THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

INTRODUCTION.

1 CORINTHIANS, XV.

THE resurrection of the bodies of true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ—of those who had been already spiritually raised from the death in sin to a life of righteousness—is the great subject which filled the Apostle's mind in writing this admired and justly-celebrated chapter.

The resurrection of the wicked dead—that “*all* shall rise again with their bodies, and give an account of their works”—that “there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust”—can be easily proved from other parts of Scripture. But it was not the Apostle's intention to dwell upon that point here. He directs our attention, in this chapter, solely to “the resurrection of the just”—of those who “die and are Christ's;” and it is a useful subject for us to dwell upon; for believers in Jesus are too much inclined to permit their most joyful

anticipations to expatiate upon the glories which shall be immediately consequent upon their death, and to overlook the fact of there being an intermediate and an *unclothed* state—a state in which the soul is to be separated from, and unclothed by the body—and of which the Apostle Paul says, “not that I would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.”—2 Cor. v. The chief object of his hope was, not merely that his spirit might be separated from a present body, subject to sin and to affliction, but that it might be clothed upon with the resurrection body, which instead of being a tabernacle—a temporary abiding place, which might be riven with the winds, and torn with the tempests—would be “*an house* not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” Now, what is more common than to hear Christians buoying themselves up with hopes of entering upon the fulness of future glory immediately subsequent to their death; and so dwelling upon this idea, as to overlook almost the necessity, or the utility of a resurrection of the body, to add in any way to their future happiness. Has not a false, a diseased, and an unscriptural theology given comfort to Christians suffering under bereavement of friends?—not the comfort which Jesus gave—“Thy brother shall rise again,” but, your friend is now in the highest heavens, in a state of the greatest and most extatic enjoyment—nothing could now

heighten his present pleasure, and in a few short years, you will go and join him beyond the skies! How different this is from the apostolic source of comfort!—The resurrection of the believer, and his re-appearance on earth; the reunion of his spirit with his reanimated and spiritualized body, was the source of the comfort and joyful anticipations of Christians in the early ages—"I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so (we must believe that) them also which sleep in Jesus *will God bring with Him*. For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent (or go before, or anticipate, or be caught up to meet the Lord in the air before) them that are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise *first* (that is, before those that are alive in the flesh; but mark, it is the dead *in Christ*—those which *sleep in Jesus*, and those only, that will then rise first; there is nothing said of the resurrection of the dead out of Christ *at that time*—the resurrection of the unjust, that is of the unjustified, shall take place afterwards), then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up to-

gether with them in the clouds, to *meet* the Lord in the air—to *meet* Him who is then coming to earth—coming to sit upon the throne of His glory—coming, in order that all the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and that He may reign for ever and ever—coming from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance upon them that then live, and know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; but coming to be glorified in his saints, and admired of all them that believe in that day; and so shall we be ever with the Lord, wherefore, comfort one another with *these words*.” Is this the comfort which the majority of Christians would now give or receive, on bereavement of a friend? I fear not, and therefore, I think it would be useful to draw public attention more to that most influential and important article of the Christian’s creed—“the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting,” consequent thereupon; or, as expressed in the Nicene Creed, “I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come,” the latter being subsequent to, and consequent upon the former; “the resurrection of the dead” being a necessary preliminary to our enjoying “the life of the world to come.” I cannot close this chapter better than by an extract from the powerful writings of a justly-celebrated living preacher* :—

* Rev. Henry Melville.

“I see that if there be a judgment hereafter, the individuals judged must be the very individuals who have obeyed here, or disobeyed here. But if the material part be dissolved, and there remains nothing but the immaterial, they are not, and they cannot be, the very same individuals. The soul, we again say, is not the man. And if the soul by itself stand in judgment, it is not the man who stands in judgment. And if the man stand not in judgment, there is no putting of the obedient or the offending being upon trial; so that there is at once an overthrow of the reasoning by which I sustained the expectation that the future comes charged with the actings of a mighty jurisdiction. I cannot master the mysteries of the sepulchre. I may have sat down in one of the solitudes of nature; and I may have gazed on a firmament and a landscape, which seem to burn with divinity; and I may have heard the whisperings of a more than human voice, telling us that I am destined for companionship with the bright tenantry of a far lovelier scene, and I may then have pondered on myself; there may have throbbed within me the pulses of eternity. I may have felt the soarings of the immaterial, and I may have risen thrilling with the thought that I should yet find myself the immortal. But if, when I went forth to mix again with my fellows, the splendid thought still crowding every chamber of the spirit, I met the spectacle of the dead

borne along to their burial; why, this demonstration of human mortality would be as a thunder-cloud passing over my brilliant contemplations, and I should not know how to believe myself reserved for endless allotments, when I saw one of my own lineage confined and sepulchred. How can this buried man be judged?—How can he be put upon his trial? His soul may be judged—his soul may be put upon trial. But his soul is not himself; and if it be not himself who is judged, judgment proceeds not according to the rigours of justice, and, therefore, not according to the attributes of Deity. And thus the grand reason why natural religion cannot fully demonstrate a judgment to come and a state of retribution, seems to be, that it cannot demonstrate, nay, rather, that it cannot even expect, the resurrection of the body. The great difficulty, which man is left to discover or himself, unaided by revelation, is, how to bring again on the platform of the future, the identical beings who are shattered by death; so that unless you introduce ‘the resurrection of the body,’ you will not make intelligible ‘the life everlasting.’ The shewing that the body will rise, is indispensable to the shewing, not, indeed, that the soul is capable of immortality, but that her immortality can consist, as it must consist, with judgment and retribution. We contend, therefore, that the great clearing up of the soul’s immortality, was Christ’s combining the titles—

‘I am the resurrection and the life.’ Let man be assured that his body shall rise, and there is an end to those difficulties which thronged around him, when observing that his body must die. Thus, it was the resurrection which turned a flood of brightness on the life. The main thing wanted, in order that men might be assured of immortality, was a grappling with death. It was the shewing that there should be no lasting separation between soul and body. It was the exhibiting the sepulchres emptied of their vast population, and giving up the dust, remodelled into human shape. And this it was which the Mediator effected, not so much by announcement, as by action; not so much by preaching the resurrection and the life, as by being ‘the resurrection and the life.’ He went down to the grave in the weakness of humanity, but at the same time in the might of Deity. And, designing to pour forth a torrent of lustre on the life—the everlasting life of man—oh, He did not bid the firmament cleave asunder, and the constellations of eternity shine out in their majesties, and dazzle and blind an overawed creation. He rose up a moral giant from his grave-clothes; and proving death vanquished in his own stronghold, left the vacant sepulchre as a centre of light to the dwellers on this planet. He took not the suns and systems which crowd immensity, in order to form one brilliant cataract, which, rushing down in its glories, might sweep away darkness from the benighted race of

the apostate. But He came forth from the tomb masterful and victorious ; and the place where He had lain became the focus of the rays of the long-hidden truth ; and the fragments of His grave-stone were the stars from which flashed the immortality of men."

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CHAPTER I.

ATONEMENT.

1 COR. XV.

1. "MOREOVER, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand ;

2. "By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain."

The good news which Paul proclaimed—which the Corinthians received with so great pleasure, and wherein we ought to stand, was the Gospel of the resurrection. When Paul was counselling Timothy to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus"—to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," what was the hope which he placed before him as most likely to strengthen him to fulfil the duties of his important station?—A hope resulting from the belief in the resurrection of his great Master

and Head—"Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my Gospel."—2 Tim. ii. 8. And, consequently, "if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."—2 Tim. ii. 11, 12. Paul thought it particularly necessary to dwell upon this most influential doctrine in writing to the Corinthians; for they were filled with the false philosophy which taught them, that though there might be a future state, it was not to be a state wherein soul and body should be reunited, but where they were to be permanently separated. They looked upon the body as connected with the soul, as being only a channel of pain—a prison-house from whence the soul was to be emancipated, and a reunion with which, under any circumstances of alteration or spiritualization, would only be for the worse. Are there no persons now among ourselves tinged with this Sadducean spirit, and almost saying, there shall be "no resurrection?"—who, not denying the immortality of the soul, yet so allegorize, or as they would say, spiritualize, the second "coming of the Lord," the immediate consequence of which shall be, that "the dead *in Christ* shall rise," that they almost verge upon the heresy of those of old, "who concerning the truth have erred, saying, that the resurrection is past already"—2 Tim. ii. 18; and who would almost deem it necessary for the eternal happiness of man, that his spirit should be

disembodied for ever? To such it is needful continually to declare the Gospel which Paul preached—which they have received in their creeds, articles, homilies, and liturgy—wherein they ought to stand, and by standing fast in which they are saved: for it hath “pleased God by” what some would call “the foolishness of preaching” this doctrine, “to save them that believe.”—1 Cor. i. 21. The Apostle Peter preached this doctrine, as we read in Acts ii. And what was the immediate effect?—“The same day there were added unto the Church about three thousand souls.” And this not the mere temporary excitement of the moment, but an effect continuous and lasting, for we read, a few verses lower in the same chapter, that “the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.” He preached it again “in the porch that was called Solomon’s,” and “the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus, *the resurrection from the dead*,” or, as the original may be literally translated, “the resurrection which is out of the dead;” in other words, the first resurrection, that is, the resurrection of the dead in Christ. Oh! how necessary it is for us to “keep in memory” what they preached on such a vitally influential doctrine; to dwell upon it in our minds; to keep prominently in view the resurrection from the dead, as the grand

summit of our hopes and expectations, lest we should "have believed in vain."

3. "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures ;

4. "And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures ;

5. "And that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve ;

6. "After that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once ; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

7. "After that, He was seen of James ; then of all the Apostles.

8. "And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

9. "For I am the least of the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God.

10. "But by the grace of God I am what I am : and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain ; but I laboured more abundantly than they all : yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

11. "Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed."

The Bishop of London remarks on verse 3 :—"The words which are here rendered 'first of all' are

otherwise interpreted, and mean, amongst the chief or principal doctrines of the Gospel." And certainly the most vital and essential doctrines of the Christian revelation are contained in these few verses. Sinner! reflect how deeply you are interested in them. "Christ died for our sins." It was our sins, your sins and my sins, that rendered the death of Jesus necessary as an expiation of them. God had decreed that death should be the consequence and the desert of sin. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."—Ezek. xviii. 4. "The wages of sin is death."—Rom. vi. 23. We had "all sinned, and come short of the glory of God."—Rom. iii. 23. If, then, you say or imagine in your heart that you have no sin, and deserve not eternal death, you are practising upon your soul a foul delusion, and the truth most undoubtedly is not in you. Yes, hide not from yourself the humiliating fact, you are a hell-deserving sinner!—for the death that was denounced was 'not merely natural death, or spiritual death, but death of both body and soul in hell.—Not annihilation, for "there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just *and unjust*." And to what must the unjustified arise? Will it not be to be cast into a state of living death, wherein they will earnestly long for annihilation, without the slightest hope of ever attaining their dread desire? This is what you deserve, sinner. When, therefore, there was no means whereby the sinner might escape the awful penalty so justly incurred—when,

to use the beautiful and emphatic language of inspiration, "The Lord saw it, and it displeased Him that there was no judgment," *i.e.*, no means whereby his righteous judgment could be satisfied. "And He saw that there was no man" that could redeem his own or his brother's soul; "and He wondered that there was no intercessor."—Is. lix. 15, 16. When we were lying in our blood, in our impotency to save ourselves, the Son of God himself rushed forth to our rescue. He heard the voice of the triune Jehovah inquiring "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" and fully aware of all the consequences of his answer, perfectly fore-knowing all that He would have to endure, He said, "Here am I, send me." He stood forth as our generous surety—He offered himself for us as a sacrifice—He endured all that punishment which we so righteously deserved to have undergone in our own persons—He "*died for our sins*," that is, on account of our sins—in expiation of our sins. He was the great "high priest taken from among men, and ordained for men in things pertaining to God, to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins."—Heb. v. 1. He permitted himself to be "delivered unto" the tormentors, to be given up to crucifixion and to death for our offences—"He was made a sin-offering for us (that is, in our stead), who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."—2 Cor. v. 21. He was "made a curse for us"—"that the blessing of Abraham might

come on us Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."—Gal. iii. 13, 14. He "gave himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father."—Gal. i. 4. He "hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour."—Eph. v. 2. It was a single and all-sufficient sacrifice—a sacrifice, the constant repetition of which in what is falsely termed the Sacrifice of the Mass would nullify its efficiency, and prove its imperfection. Oh, surely it might be said now of the Romish priest, as it was formerly said of the Jewish priest—"Every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. For by *one offering* He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."—Heb. x. 11, &c.

Sinner! beware of attempting to enhance the efficacy of that one sacrifice, by the repetition of it in the Mass, or by the addition of your own works, or bodily sufferings; beware of detracting from the fulness of the atonement once offered by the Lord Jesus Christ, by supposing that it could need poor, weak, sinful man's demerits—I was about to say merits, taking the word in that proud, ignorant, Pharisaical sense in which we

too commonly hear it made use of; but I dare not stain my pages by the idea of poor fallen, sinful creatures meriting anything from the great Lawgiver except the penalty which by His Law is awarded against sin. Beware of building your hopes of a happy futurity upon the false, sandy foundation that you are to do the best you can, and then that the merits of Jesus Christ are to be, as it were, thrown into the scale as a make-weight to balance your deficiencies. Awful infatuation! Jesus Christ will be the sole and entire Saviour, or else he will not impart salvation. When He went through the flood of sorrow—when He endured what He so susceptible felt—the withdrawing of the light of God’s countenance from Him as the representative of sinners—when He was compelled in agony, to exclaim, “My God, my God, why hast *Thou* forsaken me!” He went through that flood of sorrow alone for us, and of the people there was none, and there will be none permitted to be with Him to share in the atonement. “Christ died for our sins.” Receive it, sinner, in all its fulness; and, oh, magnify the grace of God, “in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”—Rom. v. 8. We had no goodness, no excellence to attract the love of God towards us. The sufferings of Christ, the death and atonement of the Lord Jesus, were entirely irrespective of all claim on the part of those for whom they were offered and endured. In this the love of God com-

mendeth itself particularly to our notice. And think not that the death of Christ was the procuring cause of that love; deem not that the sufferings of the Saviour purchased for us Jehovah's affection. The exact contrary is the fact. "God so loved the world," in its ruin, in its apostacy, in its rebellion, in its sin, that for the world, He gave His son; gave Him up to crucifixion and to death, to ignominy, and to torture—"that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John, iii. 16. God the Father's love was the procuring cause of the atonement by God the Son. His love provided the lamb for a burnt-offering. His love was in existence before atonement was offered, and it was in consequence of that love, that "Christ died for our sins," in order that Jehovah might be a just God, and yet a Saviour; just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in His Son Christ Jesus. We believe, also, that when "Christ died for our sins," He offered a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. We believe that "He died for all;" nay, that "if He died for all, then were all dead."—2 Cor. v. 14—that the satisfaction of the Saviour was co-extensive with the alienation of the creature—that the universality of the redemption was co-equal with the universality of man's fall, and death in trespasses and sins. We believe that "Jesus Christ the

righteous is the propitiation for our sins, and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the *whole world*.”—1 John, ii. 2. Nay, that the possibility of a “weak brother perishing for whom Christ died,” is directly intimated by the Apostle—1 Cor. viii. 11—that persons may “bring in damnable heresies, and bring upon themselves swift destruction,” whom “the Lord bought” at the precious price of His own blood.—2 Pet. ii. 1. And, consequently, that the individual never existed, whom we might not include in the category “Christ died for our sins.” We can, therefore, examine our children in the Church Catechism, and, in the plain meaning of the words, teach them that we believe in God the Son, who hath redeemed us and *all mankind*. We can, in the same sense, use that solemn address in our beautiful Litany—“O God the Son, *Redeemer of the world*, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners.” We would not seek to evade the obvious meaning of the words, by supposing them to apply to the elect taken out of the world; nor do we deem that the reception of, and belief in, this doctrine of universal redemption at all militates against the doctrine of election, or at all includes the exploded heresy of universal salvation. 'It militates, certainly, against the doctrine of reprobation—one which we cannot see revealed in Scripture, nor reconcile with the statement of the prophet—“As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no

pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.”—Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Nor with that of the Apostle—“The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”—2 Pet. iii. 9. Neither could we reconcile this doctrine with the freeness of the Gospel calls and invitations which are so universal in their character—so directly addressed to all mankind : such as, “Ho, *every one* that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price.”—Isa. lv. 1. “Come unto me, *all ye* that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”—Matt. xi. 28. “The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come : and *who-soever will*, let him take the water of life freely.”—Rev. xxii. 17.*

3. “Christ died for our sins *according to the Scriptures.*”

The death and atonement of the Lord Jesus was foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures, in type, prophecy, and figure. In the type of the pascal lamb, we see “Christ our passover sacrificed for us.” In these prophecies—“He was cut off out of the land of the living ; for the transgression of my people was He

* See Appendix.

stricken"—Isa. liii. 8.—and "After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself,"—Dan. ix. 26—we find the death of Christ distinctly foretold: and our blessed Lord expressly declares himself to have been prefigured by the Prophet Jonah: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonas. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."—Matt. xii. 39, 40.

4. "And that He was buried."

His reasonable soul was separated from His human flesh; His body was consigned to the sepulchre, His soul descended into Hades, but His soul was not left in Hades, neither did His body see corruption; "He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures," the proofs of which we have already referred to. He remembered His poor penitent disciple who went out and wept bitterly, mourning over his base denial of his Master, and when "the Lord was risen indeed, He appeared to Simon."—Luke, xxiv. 34.

5. "He was seen of Cephas."

Previously it is shewn from the accounts given by Matthew and Mark, that "He appeared first to Mary Magdalene," again to her, with Mary, the mother of James and Joses, and Salome, the mother of Zebedee's children—the three devoted women who "in the end

of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn," hurried to the sepulchre with the sweet spices which they had bought, that they might anoint the body. Then He appeared to the two disciples, as they were going to Emmaus, and "was known of them in breaking of bread." The same evening "He appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat."—Mark, xvi. 14. They are called by the Evangelists by the name of "the Eleven," and by St. Paul by the generic name of "the Twelve," though Thomas was absent, and Judas "was not," "having fallen by transgression, that he might go to his own place." After eight days, Jesus again stood in the midst of His disciples, compelled the assent of the unbelieving Thomas, by the proof—"Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing"—John, xx. 27—and received his adoration, "My Lord and my God."

6. "After that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once."

It was intimated that this should be the case, when "Jesus said unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me."—Matt. xxviii. 10. Of these, Stephen, the proto-martyr, had "fallen asleep," and "James, the brother of John, had been killed by the sword."

7. "After that, He was seen of James;"—perhaps to warn him of his early death, and to prepare

him for his early martyrdom. We cannot, however, positively decide whether this interview was with James the brother of John, and son of Zebedee, or James, the son of Alpheus, who presided at the Council of Jerusalem.

“Then of all the Apostles”—when He was with them for forty days, speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God; and in whose presence “He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.” “And last of all He was seen” of Paul, when he was on his journey of destruction and persecution of the saints of God, to Damascus. And here, reader, observe the depth of Paul’s humility, in looking back upon his former state of sinfulness, and then magnify the freeness and the undeservedness of God’s mercy extended unto him “who was before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious; but he obtained mercy”—“and for this cause he obtained mercy, that in him first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting.” Paul says He was seen of him as an abortive—as of one born out of due time—as of one who was the least of the Apostles, and not meet to be called an Apostle; and this in the depth of his humility and self-abasement, he could honestly and truly confess (though he was in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft), *because*

he persecuted the Church of God. Oh, reader! beware lest there be any approach on your part to that which will cause the most humiliating of all feelings, if God should peradventure give you repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth—persecution of the Church of God. It may be perpetrated by the sneer of sarcasm against the holy, prayerful, devoted Christian, whom you, by a total misapplication of the term, and misunderstanding of the meaning of the passage, may call “righteous overmuch;” the text referring to those who were vain-glorious of their alms or prayers, as the Pharisees were, that they might have glory of men; or who were, “concerning zeal, persecuting the Church,” in which meaning it would be more appropriate to the utterer of the sarcasm. Your persecution may be effected in another manner—by pointing the finger of scorn against the real, decided Christian, and calling him by names of derision, such as Methodist, not meaning that he belongs to that body, but using it as a generic term of reproach; or Swadler, the meaning of which is difficult to discover; or Saint, to which latter name the Christian might, in meekness, reply—

“A saint! oh, would that I could claim
The privileged, the precious name,
And confidently take my stand
The lowest in the saintly band.”

The young commencer in the ways of righteousness

may, however, be deterred for a time by the scoffs of the scorner; and oh, beware, sinner, of thus throwing a stumbling-block in the way of one of these little ones; it were better for thee that a millstone were hanged about thy neck, and that thou wert drowned in the depth of the sea. And, Christian, if you have been *given* not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake—if you have “*obtained* like precious faith” with the saints of God—give the glory where alone it is due; say, Not unto us, oh Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory. Acknowledge with Paul—“by the grace of God, I am what I am.” Oh! to grace how great a debtor. By grace wast thou saved, through faith, and that not of thyself, it was the gift of God: and see that in labours in Christ’s service you are more abundant, in order that you may give evidence that the grace of God bestowed on you was not in vain. Lay hold of every opportunity of bringing others to the knowledge of God’s truth, and, after all, say, in true humility, I have no merit—the effect cannot be fairly attributed to me, as being of my own unassisted endeavour, or my own innate anxiety abstracted from preventing grace, or grace going before, and urging me to every endeavour of usefulness in Christ’s service; in this sense, it was “not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”

CHAPTER II.

RESURRECTION.

1 COR. xv.

12. "Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead ?

13. "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen.

14. "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

15. "Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God ; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ : whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

16. "For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised ;


17. "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain ; ye are yet in your sins.

18. "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

19. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

How intimately did the Apostle consider the resurrection of Jesus Christ to be connected with our own resurrection! How certain did he deem the latter to be the consequence of the former! How important is the full reception and belief of this glorious and exhilarating doctrine! It is a means of our regeneration, for Peter exclaims, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the *resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*" It proves the certainty, and gives the glorious hope of our own resurrection, for "if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His "Spirit that dwelleth in you."

Is Paul desirous to win Christians from the things of earth, and to excite in their minds heavenly hopes and holy feelings—by what motive does he stimulate them?—"If ye, then, be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." Does the same Apostle study to animate himself by bringing before his view some bright and sparkling object of pursuit, in order that his mind may be sustained in loss, suffering, and death—on what does he fix his highest hopes?—On the resurrection—"If by any means I might attain unto the



resurrection of the dead"—“*εἰς τὴν ἑξανάστασιν τῶν νεκρῶν*”—“To the resurrection out of the dead,” is the literal translation of the Greek, that is to the first resurrection—the resurrection of the saints of God.

Does the Saviour wish to exhibit the privileges of those who by faith are incorporated with His mystic body, and are one with Him, and He with them—whence does He derive His terms and expressions?—from the resurrection. “Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

Who will not join in the exclamation of Paul—“Oh, that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection!” Why should the believer, by fixing his hopes of supreme happiness on the period immediately subsequent to death, almost practically affirm with the Sadducees of old, that there is no resurrection from the dead! Why is the great curse of sin—the severest penalty of the law—made to take that place in our minds and desires which the great hope of the Gospel—the coming of Jesus and the resurrection of His people was meant to occupy? We doubt not the fact, that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead, but is the belief of this truth so conjoined in our minds with the idea of our own resurrection, as to lead us to the apostolic conclusion—“If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised?” We believe that “if Christ be not raised, our faith is vain ;

we are yet in our sins"—but is that belief so connected with the lively hope of our own resurrection, as to fasten on us the conviction—that if in this life only we have this hope—if this cup of happy hope could be dashed from our lips ; if it could possibly be proved to us that our hope was a delusion, our resurrection a fallacy ; we should be of all men most miserable. Our hope was so extatic—our anticipations so blissful—that our misery would be proportionate to the extent of our loss—it would exceed the misery of those who were deprived of a hope of something temporal—as much as eternity exceeds time — as much as an everlasting happy futurity exceeds a temporary, transitory joy. We do not consider that this verse refers to any amount of misery which the Christian might be involved in, through afflictions, distresses, persecutions, imprisonments. We would be far, indeed, from conceding that the Christian, living a life of holiness, filled with faith in the Saviour, could, as contrasted with the man of the world, be called miserable, even if his hope was vain, which, blessed be God, it is not. The Apostle does not allude in this passage to persecutions for the sake of Christ, but his evident intention is, to exalt the nature of the Christian's hope, to state how holy and how happy was its glorious influence ; and that if their faith could possibly be proved to them to be vain — if the conviction could be fastened on them, that there was no resurrec-

tion of the dead, then the demolition of their fortress would be so great a calamity, the destruction of that hope would cause such an excess of sorrow and disappointment, that it would far outbalance any temporal misfortune which could ever occur to mortals, and we should be, of all men undergoing any amount of earthly misery, the most miserable. But let despair and grief be banished, and let triumphant joy take place, for

20. "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.

21. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

22. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

It was the custom of the early Christians to greet each other on Easter morn with the words, "the Lord is risen!" to which the response was made, "the Lord is risen indeed!" But of what a glorious harvest is Christ risen as the *First Fruits*! Oh, Christians, if your highest and holiest aspirations were more frequently fixed upon that period, when that "great multitude which no man can number, of all nations and kindreds, and people and tongues" (Rev. vii. 9,) shall cast off, as with a giant's strength, the weight of earth which now oppresseth them—shall emerge from the deepest cavern of ocean which now encircleth them—shall come forth, and stand upon their feet, a

very great army—moved by the mighty fiat of Him who said, “Lazarus come forth ; and he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes”—John, xi. 44 — of Him, who shall then issue His command to those ministering spirits who do His pleasure, “Loose them, and let them go”—if we joyed ourselves more continually in the prospect of this great harvest being gathered into Jehovah’s everlasting garner—of their being presented by their previously risen Head, pure and faultless (because arrayed in the robe of His spotless righteousness) before the presence of God’s glory, with exceeding joy ; surely, if we were thus risen—in mind, in feeling, in anticipation, with Christ—we would seek more assiduously “those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.”—Col. iii. 1. What are some of those “things which are above?”—“Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.”—Gal. iv. 26. But, wrapt in a vision of future glories, John saw, at the period when there shall be a renewed heaven and a renovated earth, “the holy city, New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven.”—Rev. xxi. 2. He heard a voice out of heaven, saying with exultation, “Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” Oh, how earnestly should we hope, and pray, and strive, that we may be here-

after bound up among the righteous ; that we may be permitted to attain unto the felicity of those who shall “ come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels ; to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator”—and the only Mediator—“ of the new covenant”—for as there is but one God, so “ there is but one Mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus.”—1 Tim. ii. 5—and who, coming to that happy and holy city through “ the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel,”—Heb. xii. 22, &c.—are, therefore, privileged to join the song of the redeemed, and say, “ unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, even His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”—Rev. i. 5.

“ By man came death.” Yes, reader, when you sit in sorrow by the cold remains of one—how loved !—how valued !—and when the murmuring thought would perchance arise, why hath God done this ?—why is this valuable hard-working minister suddenly reft from the scene of his labours—why is that flock he so well tended, scattered as sheep that have no shepherd—why this desolation ?—let the humbling thought arise—this is man’s work—“ by man came death.”

And if infidelity should still inquire—why should *all* be involved in *one*?—yea, if the foolish imagination should arise, had I stood where Adam did, I would not have fallen as Adam fell; then inquire, could there have been a godlier man formed, one more pure, more wise, more perfect? Did not “God create man *in His own image*, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them?”—Gen. i. 27. Oh, is it not a mercy that this not the case of every individual, that each of us has not incurred the responsibility, the deep and dire distress of having brought upon ourselves, and upon our children, the curse of such a dread calamity!

But surely of each individual that dies, it may be said—“if our brother had not sinned, our brother had not died.” His death was a consequence of his own sin, to which it was awarded as a penalty. Now look from the evil to its redress: we all fell in Adam, our great federal head; through his act, darkness covers the earth, and the sceptre of desolation has been given to the world, but *not eternally*—the supremacy of Satan upon earth is only temporary. Man having permitted an inferior to triumph over him—for he was of a higher make than Satan, having been created in the image of God—having trusted one of God’s creatures, instead of God himself, God has for a time given him into the hand of the enemy, and said, let him prove the consequence of having given to

another the trust which is due only to the Creator, and of having preferred a creature before God ; but it shall not be always so. True Christians have a second federal Head—the second Adam—“who is our Head, even Christ.”—Eph. ix. 15. The prince of this world shall be cast out and dispossessed by Jesus ; Death and Hades shall be cast into the lake of fire ; and therefore, it is said in Hebrews ii. 14, that He went down unto death, “that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage.” As in Adam all his children died, so in Christ shall all his children be made alive, and God’s stated intention in the creation of the world shall be fully and finally accomplished—the plan of the great Architect shall be ultimately perfected—God will have a whole creation “in His image, after His likeness, and they shall have dominion.”—Gen. i. 26.

CHAPTER III.

ORDER IN THE RESURRECTION.

1 COR. xv.

23. "BUT every man in his own order; Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at His coming."

"Every man in his own order"—*ταγματι*—in his own proper band, says Parkhurst; for *ταγμα* denotes a band of soldiers, a cohort, a legion; *ταγμα* from *ταττω*, to order, to arrange; in his own arrangement, in the order of succession to which he has been appointed. The resurrection of all persons is not to be simultaneous. Every one in his own appointed order, as ordained by God; "Christ the first-fruits"—Christ to rise first, and enter on His glory; "afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." This is here so very apparent, that it scarcely admits of doubt or cavil. The answers given by a Sunday-school child, would prove how it must be understood in this place: Who shall rise at Christ's coming?—"They that are Christ's." When shall they that are Christ's rise?—"At His coming." What is the order here stated

concerning the resurrection?—"Christ was to rise *first*, afterward they that are Christ's at His coming."

But an objector may reply, Is this proved by any other passage of Scripture, and does it not militate against other passages which intimate that the resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked is to be simultaneous?

Let us apply ourselves to this inquiry. I have previously referred to 1 Thess. iv. 13-18, and shown how strong a proof may be derived therefrom of the first resurrection of the righteous dead.

I have referred to Paul's glorious hope relative to "the power of Christ's resurrection"—"if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection out of the dead," or the first resurrection. If the resurrection of all was to have been simultaneous, he need not have had any anxiety about it, for he must have been certain that he should not be for ever in the grave, but must attain unto *a* resurrection; but if there was to be an order in the resurrection—every one in his own band, or cohort—and "they that are Christ's," and they only, are to rise at his coming, then we can understand his extreme solicitude—"if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection out of the dead."

Our Lord himself refers to this order in the resurrection, casually in a conversation with the Pharisees, "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the

just.”—Luke, xiv. 14. Why mention “the just,” if it was not in opposition to “the unjust?” Would Jesus have referred to the resurrection of “*the just*,” if there was to have been no such order in the resurrection, but if it was to have been simultaneous?

I would also refer to Revelations xx. 4–12. A certain class of persons—a band, or cohort—are seen in vision, by the Apostle, to be partakers of the first resurrection. It would be beside my present purpose to inquire of whom that class is to be composed; but that it may include the whole of that vast multitude which no man can number, is evident to my mind from this description of them. They will be those “that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which *had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands.*” In my mind, this last class includes *the whole* of the true servants of God who protest against error, and “worship God in spirit and in truth.” Of these it is said, “They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years; but the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. *This is the first resurrection.*” Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”—Rev. xx. 5, 6.

But the objector may reply, "This is a mystical book, full of symbols, and you cannot argue anything positively from it." My answer is, "This seems very plain, intelligible language, not couched in symbol, but expressed so clearly, that he who runs may read, and though cavillers have inquired, how could he see 'the souls?'—if it was the soul he saw, it is not referable to the resurrection?" To this I would answer: The word $\psi\chi\eta$, here translated soul, frequently means animal life, and more frequently the entire person—soul and body united. When it is used in opposition to the body, the word $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$, or body, is used in contradistinction, to point out the meaning, as in Matt. x. 28. "Fear not them which kill the body ($\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$) but are not able to kill the soul ($\psi\chi\eta$)." But in Matt. ii. 20, it is used for animal life—"They are dead which sought the young child's life"—($\psi\chi\eta$). Also, in Matt. vi. 25, "Take no thought for your life"—($\psi\chi\eta$). Also, in Matt. x. 39, Mark iii. 4, Luke vi. 9, John x. 11, and various other places, I having selected casually one instance out of a number from each Evangelist. And in Acts ii. 41, it is evidently used for the living persons—souls and bodies united—"The same day there were added about three thousand souls" ($\psi\chi\alpha\iota$); "and fear came upon every soul" ($\psi\chi\eta$)—43rd verse. "Then sent Joseph and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls"—

(*ψυχαι*). “And we were in all in the ship two hundred, threescore and sixteen *souls*”—(*ψυχαί*). “Let every *soul* be subject to the higher powers.”—Rom. xiii. 1. “Wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water.”—1 Pet. iii. 20. But it is needless to multiply instances on a point so plain. Sufficient has been brought forward to prove that no argument of the nature alluded to, can be sustained upon the word “souls,” (*ψυχαι*) being used in Rev. xx. 4; but it might be as well translated, “I saw the persons of them that were beheaded,” &c.; and the meek inquirer after truth, will rather pray, “Oh, Lord, grant me the *character* of those persons here alluded to; grant that I may be blessed and holy now, that I may have part in the first resurrection. Grant that I may possess that blessed and holy hope, which invigorates and sanctifies him to whom it is imparted, that I may attain unto the resurrection out of the dead—that I may attain unto the blessedness of those who “at the resurrection of the just,” “shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.”

Objector, however, may still reply, “Is not this idea of a ‘resurrection of the just,’ occurring first, and a resurrection of the unjust occurring afterwards, inconsistent with the statement in Matt. xxv.?”—To which I answer, Not in the least. Matt. xxv. is part of a conversation our blessed Lord held with His disciples, and which is commenced in chap. xxiv.

It is connected with the foregoing by the commencing particle of the chapter, "Then"—*τοτε*—"at that time." What the time is to which our blessed Saviour was referring, we must discover by looking back to the 30th verse of chap. xxiv., wherein he applies himself to answer that portion of His disciple's question: "What shall be the sign of *Thy coming*, and of the end of this dispensation?" "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds (or from the four quarters of the earth), from one end of heaven to the other." I believe our Saviour refers in this passage to His second glorious appearing in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; and having warned His disciples of the necessity of watchfulness for His appearing, and diligence in duty, He proceeds to mention the state in which He will find His professing Church at the period of His second coming. It shall not be in a millennial state of blessedness. It shall not be in a state wherein *all* are watchful. "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"—Luke, xviii. 8. Such an interrogation, coming from lips so sacred, implies the very strongest negation. He shall not find the faith of

God's elect, prevalent here on earth; He shall find the inhabitants of the earth at large in a similar state to what they were in the days of Noah, or in the time of Lot.—See Luke xvii. 26–30. But as respects His Church, when “they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with power and great glory,” *then—rore—at that time*, shall the kingdom of heaven, or the professing Church of God, be likened unto a certain number of persons, some of whom were wise, and some of whom were foolish. Now, you must remember, there is not one word spoken about death—not one hint at death—in the whole of this chapter. And as there is no hint at death, so is there no hint of a resurrection throughout it. Those who refer it to death, or refer it to resurrection, refer it to a subject which our blessed Lord assuredly never here stated, and which I solemnly believe He never here meant. It is, by a bad accommodation, and under a diseased theology which almost overlooks the blessed hope of everlasting life at the second advent of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the Bridegroom coming to His spouse, the Church, is made to mean death coming to an individual; and the wise virgins waiting for the Bridegroom, to mean their waiting for, or expecting, their own decease. I must again protest against preachers causing the great curse of the law to occupy the place which the great hope of the Gospel—the coming of Christ—was intended to fill.

If ever the parable of the ten virgins is used by accommodation to refer to death, it should certainly be explained that it is so used in a very restricted and secondary sense; and that the grand primary meaning of the parable is to explain the state in which Christ, at His coming, shall find his professing Church, and that the corollary which should be drawn from it is, "Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein *the Son of Man cometh.*"

In the next parable He proceeds to state how He will deal with His Church as to rewards; for there is a reward though it is of grace, not of debt, therefore the idea of merit is excluded. In the 14th verse I would omit the words "the kingdom of heaven is," which are printed in italics to show they are not in the original, and thus we shall find a comparison stated, and it is left to us to fill up, in our mind, to whom the comparison applies. "For as a man travelling into a far country, called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods;" so the Son of Man having gone into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return to reign in it, rule in it, and enjoy it, entrusted His servants in His professing Church with various opportunities of serving Him, and of obtaining grace for grace for themselves, by the use of the gifts so entrusted to them, and thus of becoming wise unto salvation. And as the man

travelling gave to one servant five talents, to another two, to another one, to every man according to his several ability, and straightway took his journey; even so hath the Son of Man entrusted to His people various degrees and opportunities of serving Him, and various opportunities of spiritual improvement for their own souls, and of becoming acquainted with Him and His great salvation. And as amongst the servants so treated by their travelling master, some traded with the talents given to them and gained other talents, and others hid their talent in a napkin and gained nothing; even so, some of Christ's servants in His professing Church are diligent in cultivating the opportunities of spiritual improvement; and some advance in grace and holiness rapidly; and some attain a higher degree of both than others; while some totally neglect and despise these opportunities of spiritual improvement, and are slothful and negligent with regard to their immortal interests. And as, after a long time, the lord of those servants is described as coming and reckoning with them; even so, "when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory"—31st verse—He shall reckon with those servants of His professing Church, "and before Him shall be gathered *all* nations." Here persons, with preconceived opinions on the subject, interpolate "all nations that ever existed on the face of the

earth." But I affirm they have no right to make such an interpolation, or to attach that meaning to this passage. It is not borne out by the context, nor is it borne out by the sense we invariably attach to every other passage in Scripture where this term, *παρα τα εθνη*, is found in Holy Writ.

Our blessed Lord directs His disciples in Matt. xxviii. 19, "Go ye, therefore, and teach *all nations*," &c.—*παρα τα εθνη*. Who understands that to mean all generations that ever existed from the Adamic period to the Christian era? Must it not, undoubtedly, mean those nations then existing upon the earth when His teachers, from time to time, go forth in order to instruct them. Our Lord predicts, Luke, xxi. 24, the people of Jerusalem "shall be led away captive into *all nations*"—*παρα τα εθνη*—and in Luke, xxiv. 47, "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached *among all nations*." Doubt we they were to be led captive by nations then existing, or that the Gospel was to be preached to living nations?—See also Acts, x. 35; Acts, xiv. 16; Acts, xv. 17; Romans, xv. 11; Romans, xvi. 26; 2nd Timothy, iv. 17; κ. τ. λ. As the words "*then* shall the kingdom of heaven be likened," &c., refer to the state of the members of Christ's professing Church *existing upon earth* at the period of His second coming, and as the second parable evidently refers to the treatment of those individuals *then existing on earth* at His second advent;

so the word "all nations" refers to "all nations" *then existing on earth* when "Christ shall come." We believe that "Christ shall come again with glory to judge both *the quick* and the dead." It is the judgment of the quick—of those that shall be alive at Christ's coming—to which reference is here made; and thus there is nothing in this chapter, unless you choose to put in what is *not* in it, which militates against the glorious fact—"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection!" Oh, may we all attain that blessedness!—may we be participators in "the resurrection of the just!" But objector brings forward his final argument. Your theory is overturned by the very next verse in this chapter:—

24. "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power:

25. "For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet."

"If," saith objector, "'*then* cometh the end,' where is the space for your millennial kingdom?"

"Ah, friend, your objection arises from your ignorance that the English language, in consequence of its poverty of expressions, often translates two different Greek words, by the same English word. It arises from your not having referred to the original, to see if it bore out your objection."

In Matt. xxv. 1, "*Then* shall the kingdom of heaven," &c. ; the Greek word, as I have stated, is *toτε*, and undoubtedly signifies at that particular period ; but in 1 Cor. xv. 24, "*Then* cometh the end,"—the Greek word is *εἰτα*, and that is an adverb that denotes sequence, or that some period of time must have intervened.—*e. g.* Turn to Mark iv. 28, "For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself, first the blade, *then* (*εἰτα*) the ear ; *after that* (*εἰτα*) the full corn in the ear." Also, in Mark iv. 17, "Afterward (*εἰτα*) when affliction or persecution ariseth." And in Luke viii. 12, "Those by the wayside are they that hear ; then (*εἰτα*) cometh the Devil ;" the particle "*then*" shows an interval has occurred. And in John xiii. 5, "After that (*εἰτα*) He poureth water into a basin." The word might, therefore, have been very properly translated "*after that—the end,*" and it actually denotes that an interval of time must have elapsed. But permit me to inquire, on your principles, what kingdom is He to deliver to God, even the Father ? When is He to put down all rule, and all authority, and power, and to *reign*—all enemies having been put under his feet ? Is Christ a king upon earth now in any sense of the term ? Is His law obeyed ? Is His word paramount over all the earth ? Is His bidding instantaneously performed by all—performed by you ? Ah, no ; Satan is termed now, "the God of this world"—"the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now

worketh in the children of disobedience !” How large a class ! No doubt Christ could answer to the inquiry of Pilate—“ Art thou a king then ?” “ To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world.”—John xviii. 37. But had he not just before said ?—“ *Now* is my kingdom not from hence.” *Now* Satan is enjoying the rule over our race, which he acquired when our first parents submitted to his disgraceful thrall. But soon, (oh, may it be very soon ! Lord Jesus, come quickly !) soon will Satan be deposed from his unjustly-achieved superiority. O ye sons and daughters of Zion, rejoice, “ Behold thy *King* cometh.” “ A *King* shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice *in the earth*.”—Jer. xxiii. 5. Jehovah Zidkenu—the Lord our Righteousness shall soon take unto himself His great power and reign ; and the period is fast arriving, when all earthly rule, every earthly sceptre, all earthly authority and human power, must bow down and acknowledge the supremacy of Him who hath “ upon his vesture and upon his thigh a name written, *King of kings, and Lord of lords*.”—Rev. xix. 16. “ Oh, sing unto the Lord with the harp, with the harp and the voice of a psalm ; with trumpets and sound of cornet, make a joyful noise before the Lord, *the King*. Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof ; the world, and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands, let the hills be joyful together before the Lord.” Why all this exuberance

of joy? Why these expressions of extacy and delight? "For *He* cometh—for *He* cometh to judge (that is, rule over) *the earth*; with righteousness shall *He* judge (or rule over) the world, and the people with equity."—Psalm xcvi. 5–9.

"And it shall come to pass *in that day*, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth: And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited. Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when *the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.*"—Isaiah, xxiv. 21–23. "And the city will have no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God will lighten it, and the Lamb will be the light thereof."—Rev. xxi. 23.

Lord, grant that we may be denizens of that glorious city!—that we may be "accounted worthy, for Christ's sake, to escape all those evils that shall come to pass on the ungodly at the coming of Christ, and to stand before the Son of Man."—Luke, xxi. 36.

Lord grant that we may be made "the children of God, that we may be also the children of *the resurrection.*"—Luke, xx. 36.

"After that cometh the end, when *He* shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father;

when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must *reign* till He hath put all enemies under his feet." A short time previous to this, "Satan shall be loosed out of prison," not for the purpose, as is often supposed, of bringing back this earth to its present state of wickedness, but for the express and stated purpose of "gathering His hosts together to battle, Gog and Magog," and of "encompassing the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city," with Jesus reigning in it; and in this, his last and most mad attempt, he will receive his final overthrow. The Lord Jesus will prove himself stronger than all His adversaries; "He must reign till He hath put *all* enemies under his feet." "Fire shall come down from God out of heaven, and devour" Satan and his myrmidons. "And the devil that deceived men shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."—Rev. xx. 10.

The kingdom shall be delivered up to God, even the Father; and the Triune Jehovah—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—will eternally rule and reign; God will be *all* and in all, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Lord, hasten this holy and happy period in thine own good time, and make us the subjects of thine everlasting kingdom!

CHAPTER IV.

DEATH.

1 COR. xv.

26. "THE last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Solemn announcement! Death, that wrought such ravages and woe! Death, the consequence and the desert of sin! Death, "the king of terrors."—Job, xviii. 14. "For the morning is to the wicked even as the shadow of death: if one shall know them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death."—Job, xxiv. 17.

Death must himself resign his sceptre to the universal Sovereign. "Death and Hades (the intermediate state between death and the resurrection) shall be cast into the lake of fire."—Rev. xx. 14. "And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."—Rev. xxi. 4.

"There we shall see God's face,
And never, never sin;
There, from the rivers of His grace,
Drink endless pleasures in."

"O that with yonder sacred throng
We at His feet may fall,
Join in the *everlasting* song,
And crown Him Lord of all."


Death is an enemy, because it is the great curse of the law, the consequence and the desert of sin: and the universality of death proves the universality of sin. Ah, yes, sinner! go into some Golgotha—some receptacle for the dead. Cast your eyes over its grassy hillocks, then ask yourself the question, who ~~slew~~ all these? The answer returned will be—*Sin*! Go into the world—a world of woe, because it is a world of iniquity; stand between the living and the dead; what will you find? Sin, the invariable antecedent; death, the invariable consequent. The demerit of the one, producing the desolation of the other. Oh, ye children of mortality, forget it not—approve it—apply it! Sin formed the volcano; forced the hurricane; sent forth the pestilence which mows down the population of cities and of empires. Yes, sin inflicts every pang! Sin nerves every death-throe! Sin blanches every corpse! Sin weaves every shroud! Sin shapes every coffin! Sin digs every grave! Sin writes every epitaph! Sin paints every hatchment! Sin sculptures every monument! Sin feeds every worm! The waste and havoc of centuries that are gone—the predicted desolation of the years that are yet to come, all reverberate one awful voice—

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Yea, moreover, the Apostle proves that sin slew infants; sin, which is original; guilt, which is hereditary; sin, which is imputed. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, *even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression;*" over those who had not sinned by actual transgression—had not violated any positive law, *i.e.*, over infants. This thought is beautifully expressed by Robinson, in his epitaph on four infants:—

"Bold infidelity! look, turn pale, and die,
 Beneath this stone, four infants' ashes lie,
 Say are they lost, or saved!
 If death's by sin, they've sinned, for they are here,
 If heaven's by works, in heaven they can't appear;
 Ah, reason, how depraved!
 Revere the sacred page, the knot's untied—
 They died, for Adam sinned; they live, for Christ has died."

Death reigns now, and Death is an "enemy."—This leads me to remark upon a false feeling prevalent among Christians, that we should look upon death as a friend; yea, some would be afraid publicly to confess that they looked upon death in the Scriptural light, as the "enemy" of the Christian. But what saith the unerring Word of God?—Death came into the world as the result of sin. Death constituted the burden of the curse which sin had provoked. "In

the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." That enemy has been met and foiled by our great Surety, but he is not yet shorn of his power, nor deprived of his sting. That is reserved for a future day to accomplish. When Christ shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power—when evil shall have been fully and finally extirpated—when the discordant elements which sin has introduced into the world, shall have been resolved into harmony—when God shall have again a whole creation in His image, reflecting His likeness, willingly obedient to His authority, then the last act, by which Christ's sovereignty as King on earth in His millennial kingdom shall terminate, will be the destruction of death. But objector may reply, How can death be considered the enemy of the Christian? Will it not to him be great gain? Will not to die and be with Christ, be for him far better? Yea, some Christians, lately brought from darkness to light, and with a vision of heavenly glory just opened to their view, have been so enraptured with the sight, and so fearful of falling, and coming short of that blessedness, that they have knelt down and prayed, "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove, then would I flee away, and be at rest." But that is not their Lord's will concerning them. What said He to the dispossessed demoniac mentioned in Mark v., who, when Jesus was driven from their coasts by the Gadarenes, and had gone into the ship,



knelt down on the shore, and with outstretched arms and streaming eyes, "prayed Him that he might be with Him?" "Jesus suffered him not;" He had work for him to do; "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion upon thee." No doubt, for the Christian himself it is gain, when his warfare is accomplished, when his iniquity is pardoned, and when he sleeps in Jesus. But where is the isolated individual, so useless in his generation, so bereft of kindred, of family, of dependants, or any who look to him for counsel, aid, or sympathy, of whom it could be said, his death was no loss, in his case death proved to be no enemy! Look to the hallowed names in the ministry of the Church of Ireland cut off by fever and sudden death, during the past few years! Dare we intrude on the sacred grief of their widows and orphans, deprived of Christian counsel, example, life income, and sent as the stricken deer, to mourn in private over the forfeiture of their hopes of years of earthly happiness—over the fearful loss they have sustained by this sudden bereavement! Oh, Death, thou art indeed, an enemy!—never did foe work such fearful ravages! But the Destroyer will be himself destroyed—the Consumer will be himself consumed. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." It cannot be the duty of Christians therefore to love death—to

pray for death—to anticipate death as a thing to be wished for.

The intermediate state between death and the resurrection, is briefly alluded to in a very few passages of Scripture. In Eccles. xii. 10, we are told that “when the silver cord is loosed, and the golden bowl broken; when the dust shall return to the earth as it was, the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” But the spirit is only the fragment of the man, not fitted to step into the place of cherub, or seraph, or to be busied on divine errands, until “clothed upon” with the resurrection body.

Jesus said unto the dying thief, “To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” And we express our solemn belief, founded on most certain warranty of Holy Writ, that Jesus then descended into Hades. I conclude from thence, that Paradise and Hades is the same place, but certainly not the heaven of Jehovah’s supreme glory. Paul saith, “To die, and to be with Christ, is far better,” than to be in such a severe conflict, as being in jeopardy every hour—dying daily—fighting with beasts at Ephesus. But he also says, “not that I would be unclothed, but clothed upon;” keeping the resurrection glory continually in view.

We are told in Rev. xiv. 13, “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may ~~rest~~ from their labours.”

It is, therefore, a state of repose—not of activity—of expectation, rather than of perfect enjoyment. “Here is the patience of the saints.” The souls under the altar are described as crying, “How long, O Lord, how long!”—“The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same; in hope that the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation (Πασα η κρισις), every creature groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting”—for what? Is it waiting for death to release us from trouble? Ah, no, “waiting for the adoption, to wit, *the redemption of our body*.”—Rom. viii. 19–23.

Here is the great consummation of the Christian’s hopes—the redemption of the body from death—the destruction of the last enemy—the despoiling of the despoiler—the greatest display of Almighty power—the magnificence of the triumph of Christ, when, in one moment, as the result of His one work of redemption, the graves will be emptied, the buried dead shall rise, multitudes shall burst from every spot of land, and every wave of the deep, as though they had been

ambushed for this stupendous procession, and the second Adam shall be instantaneously thronged by millions upon millions of the family of the first.

Ah, how often do we find the preacher dwelling upon the certainty of death, as a motive to action, rather than upon the coming of Christ.

I would appeal unto the personal experience of such, and inquire, if in his own case he does not find a coffin to be of all preachers the least arousing?—Whether the fact that he must die, be not the hardest to receive with practical effect? I would ask him, dost thou meditate upon death, and upon the uncertainty of life, continually? Or dost thou only think it likely as regards thy neighbour, while it is difficult to realise it as regards thyself? Dost thou every morning think within thyself, this day may be my last, therefore let me be watchful? Dost thou each evening say to thyself, I am one day nearer to my death, therefore let me be thankful? I ask thee, is the idea of death before thy soul continually, darkening the brightness of worldly joys, unmasking the emptiness of worldly pleasures, encouraging thee to nobler acts of self-denial and services in the cause of Christ, comforting thee under the oppressions of the world, strengthening thee against the might of spiritual enemies, and recompensing thee for worldly losses, the balm of the wounds of this life, and the food of the powers and faculties of the life to come? Doth the

knowledge of thy certain death work such a constant and blessed effect on thy life? Doth it? Thou wilt answer, it ought to do so. But that is not the question, ought it to do so? But doth it so? No, it doth not. It is seldom present to thy soul, and when its presence is forced upon thee by attendance at a funeral, it is painful. It is accompanied by such tears of remaining friends and relatives—it is so weak, so humiliating, so afflictive, the person taken was so useful, so active, so pious, such a loss; it makes the dispensation of God, in that instance, so dark and so calamitous, there is no beauty, no comeliness in it that we should desire it. And let me add, so it will always be, and so it ought to be, for it is sin's great conquest, and Satan's chief-work, the fulness of sorrow and affliction, the triumph of corruption, the fulfilment of the curse! Oh, it is a strange delusion of Satan, thus to have made the capital curse of God eclipse the capital promise of God. To make Satan's consummated triumph over the body to take that place in our thoughts which Christ's consummated kingdom in the body and spirit, even the resurrection, was meant to take. Besides, is the mere preaching of death, the preaching the Gospel of Christ? I read that the Gospel is good news, and is it good news to proclaim the triumph of death, instead of the triumph over death?—The proclamation of death trampling, instead of death trampled on? I am told in the Bible, that

“our Saviour, Jesus Christ, hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.”—2 Tim. i. 10. That, “forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, Christ also, himself, likewise, took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage”—Heb. ii. 14—and shall I take this abolished thing—shall I take this destroyed thing—shall I take this instrument of Satan’s power, and bring it with me in all its ghastliness into the pulpit, and be accounted a gospel minister, just because I exhibit its skeleton limbs in all the grimness of their unclothed anatomy? Oh no, I will rather dwell upon the power of Jesus Christ to destroy this enemy. God “hath put all things under Christ’s feet, in order that He may overcome all His enemies.” “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” “But when he saith, All things are put under Christ, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him; and when all things shall be subdued unto Christ, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that the Triune Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three persons and one God, may be all in all.”—28th verse.

CHAPTER V.

BAPTIZED FOR THE DEAD.

1 COR. xv.

29. "ELSE what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?"

30. "And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?"
Οι βαπτίζοντες ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν. Ὑπὲρ governing a "genitive case, signifies in the room or stead of—denoting succession. To be baptized in the room or stead of the dead, is to succeed into the place of those who are fallen martyrs in the cause of Christ, and who, if the dead rise not, are dead for ever."—*Parkhurst in loco.*

But why were they thus baptized for the dead? What was the inciting cause that prevailed upon numbers to start forward and fill up the vacant places occurring in the noble army of martyrs, when the cry of "*Christianos ad leones*," ("throw the Christians to the lions") sounded through the tyrant Nero's palace, and the ranks of the Christians were

consequently thinned? Why did persons press forward to receive the initiatory rite of baptism, thus to enrol themselves among the followers of the despised and persecuted Jesus, and to bring upon themselves the obloquy, the danger, the violent death to which Christians were but too certain to be then subjected—their places to be filled with others as resolute, as zealous? Oh, surely, no other hope could give such devotion—could sustain amidst such scenes of agony and danger, Christians having then, among other means of torture, been covered with pitch and tar by Nero, and then set on fire, in ridicule of the statement, “ye shine as lights in the world.”—Phil. ii. 15. No other feeling could have possessed sufficient strength than that holy hope which Paul enjoyed, and here refers to—the hope of attaining unto the resurrection out of the dead.

And, Christian, may not the cause of your backsliding—of your short-coming in duty—of your sin—be that this holy animating hope has been kept in abeyance—not cherished—not placed before your mind with sufficient frequency, or accuracy, as that which was the sustaining hope of the Apostolic times, and should much more be the principal point of hope of the present times. Christian, are you accustomed to dwell with delight on the idea, I shall rise to the resurrection of the just? My most earnest striving, most anxious prayers are, if by any means I may

attain unto the resurrection out of the dead? If not, may not this be the cause of your failure? Sustained by this holy, animating hope, numbers pressed forward to be baptized in place of the murdered martyrs of Jesus; and Paul, with calmness, could contemplate his state, when he stood in jeopardy of death every hour.

31. "I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus, I die daily.

32. "If after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

Oh, how many practical infidels act upon this supposed case of Paul, as if it was truth. If the dead rise not, saith the Apostle, we may live unto ourselves, and not unto the Lord.

If the dead rise not—life is short—spend your money on your lusts, eat and drink, for there is no hereafter.

Sinner, you *act* as if there was to be no resurrection; its hopes do not invigorate you; its terrors do not alarm you. But still you dare not positively promise to yourself that there is an *if* regarding the resurrection of the dead. You are told in the most express language, and you must believe it as a consequence of the resurrection of Jesus—that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and

of the unjust. You may now act upon the principle; "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die"—a short life and a merry one—the merriment of sin!—But you dare not say, that death will be annihilation. It is not "thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead." And to what must the unjustified arise? While you peruse with me the remainder of this chapter, just suppose for a moment, that the resurrection of the unjust may be the very converse of the resurrection of the just. Suppose this corruption, raised in corruption; that which is sown in dishonour, raised in dishonour; that which is sown in weakness, raised in weakness; sown a natural body, raised a natural body, liable to the same pain and agony and evil desire, but without the slightest possibility of gratifying it; having the same blotched and bloated countenance, the same foul and fetid, corrupt and corrupting carcase, and you have attained the acme of all that is horrible in imagination, and that will be fearful in reality.

As a first step, then, in the path of righteousness, forsake all your former companions in iniquity. You may say they do you no harm, they are no one's enemies but their own. "Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners."—33rd verse. Can a man touch pitch and not be defiled? Remember, sinner, you have fallen, and "fallen by your own iniquity." But how far have you fallen? Ah, man

has fallen from the height of heaven's holiness, which was first stamped upon the soul by Deity, when "God created man in His own image;" and fallen so low as now to reflect back the image and the likeness of the Evil One, in foul passions, impure thoughts, blasphemous words, and sinful actions, instead of reflecting the likeness and representation of the Holy One! Man has fallen so low, as to be willing to be the companion of devils—to speak the language of devils—to prefer the company of those who are sinners before the Lord exceedingly, and preparing themselves to be devils—to communion with God, or with the children of God. Even a heathen writer could say, *Noscitur a sociis*; a man is known as to what he is, by the company he keeps. What company, sinner, do you now chiefly prefer? Is it the company of God's saints? Is it the company of God's sanctified ones?—of such as are actuated by God's spirit of holiness? Is it the company of such as you believe a place of holiness will be inhabited by hereafter? Or do you prefer the company of such as make a mock of sin which a holy God abhorreth? No wonder that their evil communications have corrupted the good manners instilled into your mind by Christian parents or teachers. Oh, remember you are making an awful choice of company for eternity! To use a familiar figure, let us suppose two birds of opposite natures caged together for a night, and set free in the

morning ; the dove flies to join her mate, the raven seeks his congeners. Suppose two men—one enjoys the company of God's people ; he casts in his lot with the righteous ; he likes to join himself to Christian people ; he loves Christian and edifying conversation—the other ridicules his behaviour ; he joins himself with those who love sin ; who speak of sin with approbation ; who enact sin in their conduct ; bury them in the same grave—whom will they join on the resurrection morning ? At the resurrection of the just, the first will join the just, or justified ones ; at the resurrection of the unjust, the second will join the unjustified. He would do it of his own accord—he would have no meetness for, nor enjoyment of, heaven, even if he could hope to be admitted there ! Then, “ he that is unjust will be unjust *still*, and he that is filthy will be filthy *still* ; but he that is righteous will be righteous *still*, and he that is holy will be holy *still*.”—Rev. xxii. 11. Oh, then, avoid the company of the wicked, as you would avoid him that had the leprosy, the cholera, or the plague. Avoid him, knowing that evil communications with such persons are corrupting in their influence ; pray that the image and the impress of the Deity may be re-stamped on your soul by the Spirit ; that you may be sealed with the Holy Spirit, which is the earnest of your inheritance ; that the love of God's people, God's presence, God's holiness, may be imparted to you by God himself. “ Awake to

righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame." "*Awake!*" Oh, sinner, are you sleeping on the very edge of a precipice, lulled by Satan into a deceitful and dangerous repose, for he will not torment you *before the time*; and not knowing the day nor the hour when the hand of death may push you off, to fall aghast, affrighted, horror-stricken, into that gulph of perdition—to fall lower and lower and deeper still, and yet to find the gulph fathomless—the pit bottomless—your case remediless—your eternity hopeless? Oh, sinner, are you sleeping on the bed of sin—the bed of fornication—the bed of adultery—the bed of unjust gain—on the bed of lies and gross deceit, while the storm of God's wrath may be raging tumultuously all around you? God's four sore judgments—"the sword and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence"—that beast which John saw in vision rising out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy—Rev. xiii. 1—the seven heads signifying seven mountains on which that beast sitteth, and the place designated—Rome, and the judgment predicted—Popery encouraged, idolatry subsidized, Popery *established*, the minds of the rulers of a Protestant state infatuated, so as to pay with public money for the teaching of the accursed and soul-destroying doctrines of that "beast which ascended out of the bottomless pit, and shall go into

perdition"—Rev. xvii. 8—all these four sore judgments may be raging without, and, like Jonah, having descended into the hold, you may be unmoved by all, and be "fast asleep" in the arms of sin, while these judgments cause consternation to others. "What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God, if so be, that God will think upon thee, that thou perish not."—Jonah, i. 6. "Awake to righteousness, and sin not." "Cease to do evil, learn to do well." Lop off all the branches of evil. Pray that God's judgments may be sanctified to you, so that you may "come to yourself and inquire how many servants in our heavenly Father's kingdom have received mercy, are rejoicing in and enjoying His mercy, while you, for want of mercy, are perishing!" It is "your shame you have so little knowledge of God"—of God's goodness—God's justice—God's loving-kindness—God's forbearance in not having hitherto smitten you ; and if you awake not to righteousness now—if you seek not the knowledge of your God and Saviour now ; while "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life," you must awake "to shame and everlasting contempt."—Dan. xii. 2. Awake, sinner, and arise from that death in sin, and Jesus Christ shall give thee life.

CHAPTER VI.


THE RESURRECTION BODY.

1 COR. xv.

35. "BUT some man will say, How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?"

Cavillers will still bring forward weak objections, as they did in the Apostle's time, endeavouring to limit the power of the Almighty, doubting the omnipotence of Him who created a world, nay, myriads of worlds, out of *nothing*—to re-construct our mortal bodies, or to re-collect the scattered fragments of our faded and dissolved mortal frames. As if He who "spake and it was done, who commanded and they stood fast," would hereafter speak and it shall not be done; would command and be disobeyed. "How are the dead raised up?" By the power of God—by the fiat of the Omnipotent? "With what body do they come?" The question may be asked in a spirit of scepticism, or in a spirit of humble inquiry. The sceptic will say, You affirm the resurrection of the body—what body?

My body is continually changing ; it is not the same as when I was a child—as when I was a young man—nor even as I was seven years ago : with what body shall I rise ? Sceptic, did you ever lose your own identity ? In all the changes which took place in your body, and which I fully admit, were you not still *yourself* ? Suppose you committed a murder seven years ago—fourteen years ago—you escaped to a foreign land—but you returned, supposing your crime would be forgotten, your identity not traceable ; but you are arrested, and brought to trial for the offence ; you are clearly identified by witnesses of unimpeachable veracity, and the crime proved, the verdict recorded. You move in arrest of judgment you are not the same individual—your body has undergone such changes in the fourteen years, it is not the same body as it was when the assassination was perpetrated—will your plea be accepted—will condemnation not be awarded ? If, then, this plea is not valid at a human and earthly tribunal, is it any argument at all against the resurrection of the bodies of the buried dead ? Is it not sufficient answer to such a cavil to state, You will be raised with such a body as will fully suffice for your identification both by yourself and others ? Your soul will be clothed again with matter, which previously clothed it on earth ; there will be no possibility of mistake, either by yourself or by those who once knew you, that you are the same



person. In all the former changes that took place in your body, you were accountable for the acts done in the body, and so you will be hereafter. You must, in your risen body, "appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that you may receive for the things done in your body, according to that you have done, whether it be good or bad."—2 Cor. v. 10—and there will be no cavil, not the slightest doubt entertained of your identity. But you, sceptic, and all around, will be perfectly sure that it is yourself, in the very same body in which you did the evil.

But the question may be asked in a spirit of fair inquiry, "With what body do they come?" Do the Scriptures give us any information on this point? I think they do. When Jesus was transfigured before His three disciples, "His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light."—Matt. xvii. 2. He was still in the body, easily discernible and recognisable by His disciples; altered, yet the same person; glorified in His body, yet acknowledged by His disciples to be their much-loved "Master." "Master, it is good for us to be here." Ah, yes, it is good for us to be here, in the contemplation of Christ's unveiled glory—in the consideration of that glorified body like Christ's which we shall have hereafter. We cannot remain long on this mount of transfiguration; we must descend as He and His disciples did, to mix with the Satan-

vexed, sin-troubled multitude, that throng this valley of woe, of wickedness, and wilfulness which we are now obliged to inhabit.

When Jesus appeared to His loved and loving disciple in the isle of Patmos, "His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes were as a flame of fire, and His feet like unto fine brass as if they burned in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters." He had then a body—one which John knew and recognised, though then altered and glorified. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." Oh, that this may be a great verity, as regards the writer as well as the reader. What would you give if it could be said, you are the child of a nobleman—the child of an earthly sovereign? Vain distinction! You might be so, and be the child of Satan at the same moment. Oh, how much greater, how much more glorious, if it can be stated, you are the child of the King of kings, and Lord of lords—you are an heir of immortality—you are destined for a kingdom—you will be one of those who will be made "kings and priests unto God, even to the Father." "Beloved, *now* are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." It is impossible for our limited capacities to grasp the full amount of future glory; to comprehend the majesty or the grandeur of the resurrection body. After we have raised our expec-

tations to the highest; after we have strained our imaginations in the endeavour to depict all that is most grand, most glorious, most beautiful, still we shall have to confess, with the Queen of Sheba, "when mine eyes had seen it, behold the half was not told me."—1 Kings, x. 7. After we have placed ourselves on the margin of that vast ocean of bright anticipation, and figured to ourselves what we may of happiness and of excellency; after we have strained the eye of faith to the utmost distance, and laboured to discover the objects in the dim and far-spreading horizon; after we have taken the highest flight which spiritual imagination can possibly conceive; still we shall find written upon all—"it doth not yet appear what we shall be." It doth not yet appear what form the resurrection body shall assume; it doth not yet appear what capacities for happiness that body may possess; it shall be more glorious still, it shall be holier and happier than man, in his present state, can form any conception of; we shall be all that God can make us, and all that the eternal Son can procure for us. But this much we "*know*"—this is revealed, and therefore of this we have a certainty—"that, when *He* shall appear," "when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all His holy angels with Him," "when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all those that believe;" then in that moment of universal alarm

and consternation to thoughtless worldlings and evil-doers, but of rejoicing and exultation to God's saints, "then we know that when *He* shall appear we shall be *like Him*"—(ομοιοι αυτω)—similar to Him in His glorified appearance—resembling Him in His glorified body. "Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence, also, we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body (shall transform our body of humiliation), that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body (that it may become *συνμορφον*—of the same form as the body of His glory), according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things to himself."—Phil. iii. 21. This much, therefore, is revealed, "when Christ shall appear we shall be like Christ." Oh, dwell upon it, Christians, with all the rapture such an announcement is calculated to inspire. And seeing there is no escaping a resurrection, let each reader ask himself solemnly the question—"With what body shall I come?" With the natural or with the spiritual? If I am now the servant of sin, yielding my members as instruments of unrighteousness, and if I go down to the grave, impenitent and unrenewed, unchanged and unpardoned, then it is certain—certain as that Jesus rose and led captivity captive—there shall come forth from the grave, in my case, a body from which passion shall exact everything but gratification, and over which the fire shall have all power but the


power of annihilation ; but if now, through grace, I am dead to sin—if I mortify every corrupt appetite, and deny ungodliness and worldly lusts—if I live the life I lead in the flesh not unto myself but unto Him my God, and by faith in God's dear Son ; then may I say with the patriarch of old, "though after my skin worms may destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God ;" then may I joyfully anticipate the blessedness and happiness of "attaining unto that kingdom, and the resurrection out of the dead ;" then may I exclaim, Jehovah Jireh, the Lord will provide—"sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, that I could give thee, but a body hast thou prepared me"—Heb. x. 5 ; there shall, in my instance, a grand transition take place from the natural body to the spiritual body ; and when those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, having been transformed into the likeness of Christ's death, I shall arise also in the likeness of His resurrection : "I will behold, oh, my Saviour, Thy face in righteousness ; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness."—Psalm, xvii. 15.

CHAPTER VII.

DEGREES IN GLORY.

1 Cor. xv.

THE cavilling of the infidel against the resurrection, causes the Apostle, in the same spirit that his Master rebuked the unbelieving Sadducees, when He said, "Oh, ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?"—Matt. xvi. 3—to make use of the language of strong reproof, while he appeals to what God does in the natural world, as being signficatory of what he will do in the future age as regards the resurrection of the dead. "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain, but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body."—v. 36–38. "Thou fool,"—*αφρον*—from a priv. and *φρων*—mens—Thou that hast no understanding, do not the ordinary



operations of the husbandman—the commonest productions of the earth—exhibit a process which will illustrate the subject? The seed which thou sowest in the ground does not vegetate except it corrupt and die. “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”—John, xii. 24. There is a continued resurrection going on in nature, and effected by the power of God. Thou canst not effect it; thou canst not explain it. “So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, *he knoweth not how*.”—Mark, iv. 27. “Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.”—1 Cor. iii. 7. Thou canst not cause the seed to germinate, thou canst not even understand the process. Presume not, then, to limit the power of Omnipotence.

As “God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body;” as God thus acteth in the natural world, even so will He exercise His power in the spiritual world. Thy body may return to the dust as it was; thy spirit may ascend to the God who gave it, but thy body and soul shall again be reunited in such a manner as fully to preserve your *personal identity*. And as there is a variety caused by God in the works of nature, so shall

there be a variety, a distinction in the resurrection bodies.

39. "All flesh is not the same flesh : but there is one kind of flesh of men, another of beasts, another of fishes, another of birds.

40. "There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial : but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

41. "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars : for one star differeth from another star in glory.

42. "*So also is the resurrection of the dead.*"

Degrees of glory in a future state are perfectly compatible with the most perfect exercise of the free grace of God, and the most entire absence of human merit in deserving them, while they are, in my mind, clearly indicated in this and other passages of Scripture. The heavenly bodies, such as the sun, moon, and stars, are frequently used by the mind of the Spirit inspiring holy men of old, to designate Christ's future kingdom. The sun is generally used as an emblem of the great Head of the Church—the superior Luminary—the Fountain of Light—whose borrowed refulgence the lesser luminaries only reflect, and not all of them in the same degree, but differing according to their different capabilities. We find, accordingly, in the vision which I have already referred to as granted to the beloved disciple in the

isle of Patmos, this illustration used respecting the glorified appearance of our Lord and Master:—"His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength."—Rev. i. 16. And, again,—“A rainbow (blessed emblem of mercy!) was on his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire.”—Rev. x. 1. While the Prophet Malachi, using the same illustration, gives us this blessed promise, “Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing on his wings.”—Mal. iv. 2.

At the resurrection of the dead, therefore, Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, shall infinitely out-shine in glory, majesty, beauty, and excellence, all His saints who shall reign with Him—from Him they derive all their lustre; as the face of Moses shone on returning from near and intimate communion with Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, even so, in His future kingdom, Christ's risen saints shall merely reflect Christ's future glory: but not all exactly in a similar degree. “There is one glory of the sun”—a superior glory—that only shall be exhibited by Jesus Christ; but “there is another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, and even *one star differeth from another star in glory*; so, also, *is the resurrection of the dead.*” Oh, Christian, murmur not at this, as though there were in it something unjust; lay aside all such envyings, and seek that an entrance may be “ministered unto you *abundantly* into the everlasting

kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—1 Peter, i. 11. There will be no injustice done to you; all the capacities of happiness granted you, or cultivated by you, will be given their fullest powers of enjoyment. But do we not see some Christians now possessing greater powers of enjoyment in spiritual things, deriving more pleasure from reading the Holy Scriptures, from communion with God, and with God’s people, than other Christians, and may we not infer it will be so hereafter?

This idea is said to have been illustrated by Dr. Johnson, when it formed the subject of his conversation with some friends after dinner. There being several glasses on the table, of different sizes, he filled some of them with water—“There,” said he, “is a complete illustration; all are as full as they will hold, but some have a capability of holding more than others.” A distinction in future glory, and a distinction in future punishment, is, however, clearly stated to be the intention of God, by our Lord himself. In Luke xix., our Lord, finding that His disciples “thought that the kingdom of God should *immediately* appear,” rectifies their opinion with regard to the *immediateness* of its arrival, by comparing himself to “a certain nobleman who went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, *and to return*.” Jesus Christ has thus gone into a far country—even into heaven itself—to receive for himself a kingdom;

and He will return to reign in it, and to rule in it, and to enjoy it; and as that nobleman is described as having "called his ten servants and delivered them ten pounds, saying, occupy till I come;" even so, our Lord has given unto us various opportunities of trading with the talents entrusted to us, and of spiritual improvement, whereby our capacity of spiritual enjoyment may be increased and enhanced; and as that nobleman is described as saying to the first servant, who was able to say, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds: "well, thou good servant, because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities;" and to the second, who said, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds: "be thou also over five cities;" the reward being exceedingly above the diligence used or the acquirement obtained, to show that it is "of grace and not of debt;" even so, in Christ's future kingdom, there will be a distinction made between those who have sought wisdom, and glory, and immortality with greater earnestness, and those who have, comparatively speaking, neglected Christ's salvation—between those who "kept themselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life," and those who were "saved with fear," merely, as it were, "pulled out of the fire;" and therefore, in the fullest accordance with the dictates of God's eternal justice, we may believe that, as

“one star differeth from another star in glory, so, also, is the resurrection of the dead.” The truth of the converse of the proposition is not darkly intimated to us by our blessed Saviour, when He declareth, “that servant which knew his Lord’s will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.”—Luke, xii. 47, 48. This refers to what shall take place at the coming of Christ:—see 46th verse—“The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him,” &c.

Sinner, when you are foolishly comparing yourself with some other sinner who may have had far less opportunities of spiritual attainment; when, in a Pharisaic spirit, you may be thanking God that you are not an extortioner, not unjust, not an adulterer, and laying the flattering unction to your soul that you are consequently not a sinner, and do not deserve hell, as you may judge that such sinners merit; remember there will be degrees of misery as there will be degrees of glory; that there will be a darker, heavier, severer doom allotted to him “who knew his Lord’s will and did it not”—who had the Bible in his house, religious ordinances in his land, Gospel preaching in his parish church—than to that poor heathen who never heard of the name of Christ, and never knew the way of

salvation; that while our Lord "upbraids those cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, *because they repented not*, saying, Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida, for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes"—Matt. xi. 21—still, He intimates that Tyre shall be without excuse, and Sidon shall not escape condemnation; and merely declares, that there shall be distinction in the measure of punishment: "It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you." But in like manner, when "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever"—Dan. xii. 3—there shall be a distinction in the brightness, in the reflection of Christ's glory, as exhibited by one more than by another, for as "one star differeth from another star in glory; so also is the resurrection of the dead."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GLORIOUS CHANGE.

1 COR. xv.

“It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.”

Oh, Christian! do you frequently fix the eyes of your mind on the glory and the grandeur of this transcendant change? Or is it merely when death hath made an irruption into your household, and taken away some loved and valued child of God, that you calm your mind and comfort your heart by the knowledge that this change surely awaits your removed Christian friend, while you exclude it from your idea as applicable to yourself? When you commit “earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust,” you, perchance, say—that buried friend shall rise—that much-loved body shall be changed *and glorified*—those well-remembered lineaments shall

reappear resplendent in resurrection glory. But do you also say, my own steady and constant aim—my own invigorating and faithful hope—is, that this glorious change may be mine; that this “body of humiliation” may be fashioned like unto Christ’s glorious body; that this body of corruption and weakness may possess the property of incorruption—may be indued with power; that this natural body may not remain a natural body always, subject to nature’s weakness, to nature’s pain, to nature’s infamy, and disgrace, and dread debasement, but be raised a spiritual *body*—not a spirit, but a spiritual body—“not that I would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life?”—2 Cor. v. 4. The “earthly house of this tabernacle must be dissolved;” its cordage is being daily loosened; its stakes are being one after the other plucked up; it is liable to be riven by accident occurring in travelling; it is subject to agony and loss of limb; to disease and fearful torment. I would not perpetuate this natural body, even had I the power: I would not—oh, I pray that I may not—have a natural body hereafter; I know “there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body”—v. 44—and I long for the latter.—“I groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with my house, which is from heaven.” Oh, my God, prepare this spiritual body for me, and prepare me for it; increase my

faith, enlarge my hope; instigate my desire to a greater degree, that this glorious body may be destined for me and I for it—and enable me with full assurance of understanding, full assurance of faith, and full assurance of hope, to run the race that is set before me, looking unto Jesus—my risen head—the author and the finisher—the first cause—the continuer and the final accomplisher of this faith, which is not of myself—not mine to boast of—but “the gift of God;” that so, living with Christ for ever, and being like Christ for ever, I may continually reflect His glory, and in my spiritual body, “shine as the brightness of the firmament—as the stars for ever and ever.”—Dan. xii. 3.

“And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit.” Reader, have you been made by the quickening Spirit, a *living* soul? Oh, remember there is such a thing now in this life as a living soul, and a dead soul. There are three kinds of life; natural life, spiritual life, and eternal life; and three kinds of death also, natural, spiritual, and eternal; and if you have not been gifted with spiritual life now, by Him whom you acknowledge in your creed to be the Lord and Giver of life—if you have not been made a *living* soul now, your soul being naturally dead in trespasses and sins, being in a state of spiritual death *now*, *must* be condemned to eternal death hereafter.

You cannot give yourself that spiritual life, no more than you can give yourself natural life ; it must be the work of a higher power, of a holier influence. Oh, then, pray to Him who alone possesses the power—pray to the Omnipotent, to raise you from the death in sin to the life of righteousness. Pray to Him who first breathed into Adam the breath of life, and he became a living soul, to breathe into you of His eternal Spirit, to make you spiritually alive now, that you may live eternally with Him hereafter. We know that the moral image of God was defaced in Adam ; that the high and holy feeling which would have led him at first to run and greet his Creator, was changed into terror at his appearance, that he ran to hide himself ; and unregenerate man seeks to do so now ; he would fain hide himself, if possible, from God ; but “ whither can he go from his Spirit ? or whither shall he flee from his presence ? ” And, then, “ lest Adam should put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever ”—lest he should perpetuate this state of living death—lest he should stereotype, as it were, this natural body—lest he should never possess the spiritual body, the Lord God, in love, in mercy, sent him forth from the garden of Eden—“ drove out the man,” in order that his earthly house of this tabernacle—his natural body—might be dissolved, and that he might have hereafter, the house not made with hands, eternal in the

heavens, the spiritual body which He had prepared for him.

Reader, that tree of life has never been transplanted out of Paradise.

"I knew a man (saith St. Paul), whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell; God knoweth: how that he was caught up into paradise." It is still in existence; pray that in the spiritual body it may be "given unto you to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."—Rev. ii. 7.

You may long that such should be your state now: but patience must have its perfect work. "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterwards that which is spiritual."—v. 46. We must endure the body of this death now; we must endure, as seeing Him that is invisible; we must run with patience the race that is set before us; we must endure the cross before we obtain the crown. "The first man is of the earth earthy, the second man is the Lord from heaven." Oh, reader, are you still of the earth, earthy? Are all your desires bounded by earth; are your hopes fixed on something of the earth—earthly possessions, earthly vanities, earthly follies, or earthly sin? Then, you must descend into the earth, and rise again out of the earth, and remain earthy still—low, grovelling, sinful, selfish, hateful, and hating others, condemned

to the place where hatred reigns, where there is no love, and no law, where all hate each other, and try to torment and injure the other. Oh, will you not flee from that wrath *to come* ? Oh, will you not pray that you may be born again—born of God—born from on high—made a new creation in Christ Jesus—born of the Spirit—made God's child by adoption and grace ; knowing that, "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy ; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly"—that you may put off the one likeness, and be gifted with the other—no longer find your chief delight in minding the things of the earth, but permit your hopes to dwell on heavenly scenes, on heavenly objects—that as you have "borne the image of the earthy, so you shall also bear the image of the heavenly."—v. 48. And, remember, it is life and not death ; it is Christ who is our life, coming in glory, and not our spirit's going to Him at our decease—that is to be the object of our highest hope, of our period of principal happiness.

It is not certain that we shall all die—nay, it is perfectly possible that there may be many persons now living on earth, "who shall never taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." "We know not the day nor the hour when the Son of Man cometh." It may be very near at hand. Lord, hasten thy coming and thy kingdom ! Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

And with regard to those who shall be living when the Lord comes, the Apostle tells us: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep (that is, we shall not all die), but we shall all be changed; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible; and we shall be changed."—verses 50–52. It was evidently not revealed to the Apostle that he must die, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. It is evident, that though he knew that to depart and be with Christ was far better than to live in a world of toil, trouble, and disappointment—yet, that his highest hopes, his most anxious and earnest aim was, "if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection out of the dead;"—attain unto the glorious change, from the mortal body to the immortal one; from the natural body to the spiritual body. Oh, reader, place that before *your* mind also, as the object of your fondest desire; as the goal of your spirit's soarings; and the effect will be, you will count all else as loss, for the excellency of this knowledge of Christ Jesus.

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption; and this mortal must put on immortality. So, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this

mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written—death is swallowed up in victory. O, death, where is thy sting? O, grave, where is thy victory?”

Reader, has this grievous sting been by God from you extracted? Oh, have you been—by the application of the blood of sprinkling to your souls—that blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, which cleanseth from all sin—by the atonement of Him who took part of your nature, that “through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil”—have you been delivered from the state of them “who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage?” The true Christian fears not death. He is here at school; in a place of tuition; of necessary restraint; “under tutors and governors until the time appointed of his Father”—death may be the black messenger sent to fetch him home—to his Father’s mansion—to his Father’s fullness of love, and joy, and happiness in His kingdom; but the Christian does not court death—does not long for or pray for death—the Lord has permitted certain objects of earthly affection to be entwined here around his heart—objects of lawful earthly attachment—the husband should love the wife, and the wife the husband—parents should love their children, and children their parents—the Christian does not merely desire, therefore, his own happiness,

but that all should enjoy happiness together; does not wish for his own removal to his Father's habitation—while grief and woe, and perhaps loss of income, involving the absence of the very necessities of life, are the lot of loved survivors. But the Christian longs for the coming of Christ—the period when “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; when there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain”—Rev. xxi. 4—when “the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God;” he longs for the time when all may rejoice together—when the Lord our God shall have come, and all His saints with Him—when “the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God: and the *dead in Christ* shall rise first, that is, shall ascend before those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord; and when we who are alive and remain, shall be caught up, together with them, in the clouds to meet the Lord who is then descending and coming to earth; and so we shall be ever with the Lord.” The Christian feels these to be comforting thoughts and comforting words to his own heart, and with them he comforts others; and when “this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality,” then shall he

be enabled to take up the final song of triumph, and exclaim—"O, death, where is thy sting? O, grave, where is thy victory?" "The sting of death is sin." It was removed by Him, "who bore my sins in His body on the tree;" who suffered for me the just for the unjust, that he might bring me to God.

"The strength of sin is the law." The demands of the law were fully satisfied by Him who fulfilled the law for me, whose righteousness is imputed to me, and who bore for me the law's sternest penalty; who "was wounded for my transgressions and bruised for my iniquities; upon whom the chastisement of my peace was laid, and with whose stripes I am healed"—Isaiah, iii. 3—who for me was brought as "a lamb to the slaughter," and "became obedient to death, even the death of the cross." Wherefore, all my salvation—from its commencement to its conclusion; from its first dawn of light in my soul to the full burst of glory in God's kingdom—is not due to self—is not of my own work or my own merit—is not due to my own endeavours or my own prayers, or my own righteousness—"my own righteousness is as filthy rags"—I abhor it—I am presented pure and faultless before the presence of God's glory, "not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." I have attained unto "the blessedness of the man unto whom

God imputeth righteousness without works"—Rom. iv. 6—and when, therefore, I am ascribing praise unto Him by whom my salvation was achieved—by whom my tottering steps were upheld in the world, and by whom I was finally brought to God—I would say, in deep humility, "not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name be all the glory."—Psalm, cxv. 1. "It was not of me that willed it, nor of me that ran to meet God, but of God that shewed me mercy."—Rom. ix. 16. "Thanks be to God, who gave us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I will cast my crown before the throne, and say, oh, Lord, "thou, and thou alone art worthy—thou wast slain and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood." Left to myself, I should have been foiled by Satan—I should have been utterly unable to cope with the strong man, armed in my own strength—I should have been obliged to mourn over final and irretrievable defeat. Oh, "thanks *be to God* who gave me the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."—Rev. v. 13.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PRACTICAL EFFECT.

1 COR. XV.

AND now, reader, are you inclined to inquire what is the practical effect which the belief of this doctrine would have upon the life, and actions, and conversation, and conduct? Would it make men more holy? More active in duty? More disinclined to sin? More devoted to God?

Would it have any effect upon the unconverted and the ungodly? Would it endear Christ still more to the believing Christian's heart?

It is evident that the Holy Spirit, speaking by the inspired Apostle, knew that this was the very effect which belief in this doctrine would undoubtedly produce, for the corollary which he adds, and the conclusion which he draws is—

58. “*Therefore*, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

Therefore—because this first resurrection of God's saints is certain to be hereafter accomplished; *therefore*, because a glorious resurrection body is provided by God for his own believing people; *therefore*, because this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality; *therefore*, because God claims, and unto God alone is due all the honour, all the power, by which the regeneration, the conversion, the justification, and the sanctification of His people was effected: and that we give no thanks to self, but must attribute the “thanks to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ”—therefore, do not permit a present victory given you to-day over Satan, to cause the sentinel to sleep on his post,—the Christian to slacken in the performance of the duty which the Lord has given him to do as his work. The Lord sends not loiterers, but labourers into his vineyard; he places before their minds all these high hopes, all these glorious prospects of future blessedness, to incite them to more firmness in resisting the assaults of Satan in future; to cause them to be less likely to be moved by the enticements of sinners; to give them greater activity in the performance of the Lord's work, knowing that their labour was not, and would not, be in vain, but would be accepted by Him, whose they are, and whom they serve, as evidences that they were his dear children—“*elect*, according to the foreknowledge of God the

Father, *unto obedience*.”—1 Peter, i. 2.—“Predestined, called, justified, and sure to be glorified.”—Rom. viii. 30.

“Therefore,” &c., 58th verse.

Before I conclude, I must address a few words to the unconverted, as to the effect which all that has been said may be likely to have on them.

They may have read that all the steps whereby a man is brought to serve God, from the commencement of the warfare to the final victory, belongs to God, and to God only, and so it does : and they may draw the conclusion, there is no work for them to do—there is nothing within their power to effect. They may say, I am dead in trespasses and sins, and I cannot vivify my own soul, and that is true. They may assert—I am like Lazarus when he lay long in the tomb ; and I cannot say to my entombed soul—nay, further, no *man* can say with the voice of power—“Lazarus, come forth ;” and, therefore, I must sit still in the lap of sin, and can do nothing. To them I would say, your premises are true, but your conclusion false. Oh, beware of sucking poison like the wasp from the flower, out of which the bee sucks honey. There is much in the power of the unconverted, and you may learn it from the very illustration of Lazarus. What said the Lord as a preliminary to his raising the dead ? What command did he issue which *human* agency was to effect ? “Take *ye* away the stone.” The same

power which could order Lazarus to come forth, could have ordered the stone to start forth from its place, and it would have obeyed him. But he did not choose to exercise divine power, when human instrumentality could effect the object. And so saith God now. Parents, "take away the stone;" remove the impediments to your child's conversion. Take away his ignorance, by giving him a good and Scriptural education. Take away causes of prejudice—reasons of offence—and keep your child from associates which are likely to lead him into evil.

Rulers, "take away the stone" which would incarcerate and entomb that Word, the entrance of which giveth light. Oh, let it not be said—those who are children of slaves in Jamaica may be educated in the precepts of God's word of truth—those who are children of idolaters in Hindostan may be educated, as Timothy was from a child, in Bible truth, and given to rejoice in Bible promises—while in our own dearly loved country, the ban, which a famous statesman placed upon the expenditure of money left to his children, shall be pronounced in spiritual, as it was by him in temporal matters, and the edict go forth—"but not in Ireland!" Oh, thanks be to God, who has issued the command, to a portion of His people in Ireland—to His active, useful, intelligent, and true Christian Church in Ireland—"Take away the stone" which incarcerated my Book—which kept it entombed

in a dead language—which kept it manacled like a prisoner—but who, through the instrumentality of the Bible Society, have placed in the power of all to obtain it; and by Scriptural Schools, are now employed in causing the young to become acquainted with it.

Oh, thanks be to God, who has said to the Church in England, the originator of the Society for conducting Irish Church Missions, “Take away the stone” of impediment which prevented practically the preaching of the Gospel in the Irish tongue to the Irish people, which has sent forth Irish-speaking missionaries to proclaim to the Irish people, in their own loved language, the wonderful works of God. And thanks be to God, who has inclined the heart of that excellent Christian Bishop, the Bishop of Tuam, to ordain several Irish-speaking clergymen, though they had not the advantage of a college education, and to license them in several parts of his Irish-speaking diocese; the success of whom has been so great, that one of them, in a recent letter, could thank God, that he had emptied the Romish chapel down to six, where the people used formerly to be kneeling on the road outside for want of room. What causes the far, wild, West of Ireland to be now the most peaceable and well-conducted portion of the Queen’s dominions? What gives it such interest in the eyes of the Christian tourist? Why are Connemara, and Clifden, and Achill, and Erris, the points

to which he chiefly directs his steps? Because even the little ragged children he meets on the road interest him by their surprising acquaintance with Scriptural truth. Because the Scriptural answering in the schools proves so completely their knowledge of Bible truth, and draws out their native shrewdness and intelligence. Because the fear that tourists formerly possessed of being assassinated if they went to Ireland, is now removed, and they are sure they can travel through beautiful scenery unmolested, since the inhabitants have been imbued with Scripture truth, and taught the Lord's command—"Thou shalt do no murder." "Who hates the Bible most in Ireland, friend?"—said an English tourist to an Irish peasant—"Sure, sir, we all know it's the Priest." "Does any one hate the Bible more than the Priest?"—"Sure, then, it must be the Pope, sir." "Does any one hate the Bible even more than the Pope?"—"It must be the Devil, then, sir, for there's only *the three* of them that hate the Bible all entirely."

But does not the unconverted man place stumbling-stones and rocks of offence on his own path, which prevent the probability of his conversion, and which could be removed by his own energy and firm determination?

Unconverted sinner! you may choose to frequent the public-house—you may choose to drink there to

intoxication—you may choose to be an habitual drunkard, or an habitual fornicator, or an habitual swearer, or an habitual thief—you may choose to “clothe yourself with cursing as with a garment”—or you may choose to take away such stones out of your path; to remove such positive impediments to the probability of your conversion. You may choose whether you will attend in the house of God—whether you will be heedful or heedless of the prayers and the preaching—whether you will read God’s word in private—whether you will place yourself in the attitude of adoration, and endeavour to pray. The practice which conscience tells you to be wrong, is the stone upon the grave: you must remove the stone by leaving off the practice. The companion who leads you into sin, is a stone upon the grave; you must remove the stone by forsaking the companion. The neglected duty to which you are inwardly prompted, is a stone upon the grave; you must remove the stone by attempting the duty. You must first “cease to do evil,” before you “learn to do well.” And then, having exercised your own human power, where it is in your power to perform God’s command—if you invoke the aid of the Omnipotent to perform His part when Divine power must be exerted—for though God may intend good to His own people, “I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them,

saith the Lord God."—Ezek. xxxvi. 37. God will say to the dead: "Arise"—God will give the quickening influence by which life shall be conveyed to your soul; you will arise now from death in sin to life in righteousness, and be enabled thenceforward to thank God, who will give you the victory by which you will be empowered to tread down Satan under your feet; and believing all the glorious promises—looking forward in faith, and hope, and love, and assurance, that this glorious resurrection body shall be yours—that your corruptible shall put on incorruption, and your mortal shall put on immortality—you will be "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye will know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

May the Lord grant this to be the happy lot of both writer and reader, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

APPENDIX.

THIS subject is so fully and strongly placed before the mind in a note on "The Better Covenant Practically Considered," by the Rev. Francis Goode, that I take the liberty of transcribing some portions of it :—

"The doctrine laid down under this head, is one upon which there exists a very material difference of sentiment among Christians.

"The benefit of Christ's death is held by many to be so limited to the elect of God, as that all other were not even contemplated in His blood-shedding, and are, therefore, as effectually excluded from any interest therein, as if it had never been shed at all. 'Christ,' says Witsius, 'according to the will of God the Father, and His own purpose, did neither engage, nor satisfy, and consequently, *in no manner* die, but only for all those which the Father gave Him, and who are actually saved.' This statement appears to me to be in direct and irreconcilable opposition to the plainest testimonies of the Scripture, the force of which can be in no otherwise escaped from, by Witsius and other advocates of *particular* redemption, than by explaining away the expression

'the whole world,' to mean the whole *elect* world; and the term 'all,' as signifying 'not all, and every one in particular, but the elect, of whatever nation and condition.' The view which we take of this great doctrine must materially affect our estimate of the divine character. For it is in redemption, especially, that the love of God is manifested (1 John iv. 9), and, therefore, according to the admitted extent of redemption, must be our sense of the vastness of that love. Again, I see not how we can be at liberty to propose the Gospel freely to every creature, as something that *to him individually* is a message of gladness (Mark xvi. 15), if Christ in no sense died for every creature; and, therefore they appear to act far more consistent with their own system, however in opposition to Scripture, who make no general offers of salvation like that (Prov. i. 23), but content themselves with merely declaring the forms of the Gospel. Certainly, a convinced sinner (whom guilt makes sufficiently distrustful, even with the freest offer of the grace of the Gospel) will hardly feel himself welcome to *accept* it, if he gather from our ministration of it, that it belongs to none but a select class, of which it is just as possible (to say the least) that he may *not* be as that he may. The subject being of this importance, I shall state, as briefly as I can, what I believe to be the truth of God in this matter; examine some Scriptures which appear to corroborate my view of it; and answer a few objections which are commonly urged against it. The Scriptures declare that 'God so loved *the world*' [not in its original creation state when he pronounced it to be 'very good,' but in its fall, in its ruin, in its alienation, in its sin,] 'that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life' (John iii. 16); that 'Christ died for all'—(2 Cor. v. 15); "gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time"—(1 Tim.

ii. 6); 'tasteth death for every man' (Heb. ii. 9); and hereupon may Christ be proposed freely to the faith of *every* man, as being a Saviour for *him*, as sincerely as for any other individual of Adam's family.

"But it is a truth put beyond dispute from every day's experience, that this immensity of divine compassions is utterly thrown away on men. Man will not avail himself of the provision made for his salvation, but 'tramples under foot the Son of God.' This horrid malignity of sin God knew from the beginning; and the grace of the Gospel as it is provided for each man, serves to bring it out and display it to the amazement and horror of all His intelligent creatures; and so exceedingly to glorify God in their everlasting destruction. There is not a sinner in hell, to whom the word of the Gospel came, but had a free and full salvation within his reach; but he would not take it—would not believe, that there was any such thing for him, or that he needed it, if there were. The enmity of the human heart is such, that not a single creature will, of himself, *take* the mercy provided for him. If God had no further end in the unlimited provision of redemption, than the creature's salvation, Christ (as far as regards such men) has died in vain.

"Here, then, is *another* awful impossibility, totally distinct from the former, not arising out of the nature of Deity, and over which, therefore, man had no power, but one made by himself—even the deadly aversion of a being in himself *capable* of believing and embracing salvation, to any such exercise of his powers towards God.

"And herein appears that miracle of love which passeth knowledge, that *special* love of God (Father, Son, and Spirit) towards an elect people, whereby even this *super-added* impossibility is removed, this accursed venom of an evil nature is extracted, by the omnipotence of Divine

grace, to the everlasting praise of His glory in His chosen people. In them He *makes effectual* the redemption that is by Christ; applies it, in all the fulness of its blessing, to their souls. These, especially, the Father had in view, in the gift of His Son; these the Son had especially in view, in His sacrifice of himself for the human family; and to these the Spirit of Christ especially, and effectually, reveals His salvation, bringing it into their experience in time, and keeping them through time, to the final enjoyment of it in eternity.

"The Scriptures, therefore, frequently speak of redemption by Christ, as having His chosen and peculiar people for its object. To this effect are the following passages:—

"'For the transgression of *my people* was He stricken.'—Isaiah, lili. 8.

"'I lay down my life *for the sheep*.'—John, x. 15.

"'He (Caiphas) prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the *children of God* that were abroad.'—John, xi. 51, 52.

"'Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood.'—Acts, xx. 28.

"'Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved *the Church*, and gave himself for *it*.'—Eph. v. 25.

"'Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by Him do believe in God,' &c.—1 Peter, i. 20, 21.

"These Scriptures (and more, perhaps, might be added like them) plainly speak of the death of Christ as having *express* reference to His sheep, His children, His Church, those who *by Him* do believe.

"For their sakes Christ undertook the work of redemption; and the joy that was set before Him, in their everlasting salvation, sustained Him through all His sorrows, in the work by which it was to be effected.

"But it by no means follows, that, because Christ thus died for his elect, therefore He died for them *only*; that His death had no other intention, and was to answer no further end. The manifold wisdom of God answers *many* ends, where *one* such is, yet, *principally* designed. Indeed to argue from the above Scriptures, that all but God's elect are excluded from an interest in the death of Christ, appears to me exactly analogous to the reasoning of those, who, collecting the passages of Scripture which declare the proper *humanity* of our Lord, infer from thence that He was *mere* man. He was man, therefore He was *no more* than man. He died for the elect: therefore He died for none but the elect.

"There are numerous passages of Scripture which speak, just as unequivocally, of the intention of the death of Christ as being for the redemption of *mankind at large*; and the fair way of dealing with the word of God—which, bearing the stamp of its divine original, will not accommodate itself exactly to any system of men—is to give to each class of passages its plain and full import; and never try to reconcile the one with the other, by denying or explaining away either.

"Read John, iii. 14, 15. Analogies are generally uncertain, and may easily mislead; but here is one pointed out by the Redeemer himself; and nothing can be more striking and complete than the parallel between the two cases.

"The serpent was confessedly lifted up for *all that were bitten*—Num. xxi. 8. Christ is lifted up for all that have been bitten by 'that old serpent the devil.' The serpent was lifted up with the *intention* that *all bitten* might be

healed. Christ is lifted up, 'that the *world* through Him might be *saved*.' Does it follow then, that if this were His intention, all *must* be saved? Not at all; any more than that all bitten *must* be cured. The cure depended on *looking*: '*Look* unto me and be ye saved.' If any Israelites who were bitten, refused, through unbelief, and contempt of such a strange mode of treating, to look to the serpent; they perished. If any sinner refuse, in the same unbelief, to look to Christ, he perishes because of unbelief. In both cases the intention of God in lifting up was the healing of *all* that were diseased. He excluded not a single creature from the merciful provision. But it does not follow, that it was His intention to *overcome*, in every case, the wicked obstinacy of men, in *rejecting* the provided mercy. Is the provision then in vain as respects such? No; no more than the provision of healing was in vain, for any Israelite who refused to avail himself of it.—[The justice of God was vindicated. The provision was made whereby mercy might flow. God called, man refused.]

"Read John, iii. 16–18.

"The term *world* is said by those who limit the intention of the death of Christ to the Church, to mean the elect world, or some men all the world over. But this is surely to alter Scripture; and it may be fairly inquired, had Christ meant to assert the love of God towards all men, how could he have expressed it otherwise, than he has here? Further, can it be really thought, when Christ says, verse 17, that God sent Him not to condemn the world, that He meant to tell Nicodemus God sent Him not to condemn the *elect*? . . . [In all other places where the term *world* is used, it seems to be invariably used to describe mankind in an unregenerate condition.—See chap. vii. 7.—xiv. 17, 19.—xv. 19.—xvii. 6, &c.]

"Read 1 Tim. ii. 4-6.

"The term '*all*' is explained as meaning, here, not every individual, but some out of all ranks and countries. But let another Scripture explain the extent of the word *all* in this passage—'That He, by the grace of God, should taste death for *every man*.'—"υπερ παντος."—Heb. ii. 9. Where the singular number necessarily shuts up the application to every individual of the human race. Take another instance out of this epistle:—

"'Who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.' (1 Tim. iv. 10.)

"All men here are certainly not elect men, because they are expressly distinguished from the general mass by the word specially.

"Read Titus, ii. 11.

"This passage appears to me to be inaccurately rendered in our translation.

"The Greek is—Επεφανη γαρ η χαρις του Θεου η σωτηριος πασιν ανθρωποις.—'For there hath appeared the grace of God which bringeth salvation to all men.'

"Read 2 Peter, ii. 1.

"The word *bought* is the same as that rendered *redeemed*—Rev. v. 9—'Thou hast redeemed (ηγωρασας) us to God by thy blood.' Here, then, are persons who bring upon themselves swift destruction, and yet even these are bought or redeemed by Christ, who, in virtue of the price paid for them, is called their δεσποτης, or rightful owner.

"It is similar to Jude, 4.

"Τον μονον δεσποτην Θεον και Κυριον ημων ιησουν Χριστον αρνουν μενοι—literally, 'Denying Jesus Christ, the only Lord God and our Lord.'

"Read 1 John, ii. 2.

"In what sense St. John uses this expression, 'the whole

world,' may be gathered from chap. v. 19, where it is repeated—'the whole world lieth in wickedness.' . . .

"It is commonly objected—If Christ died for all men, and all are not saved, he died in vain. But it is never asserted that Christ died with the intention of bringing all men to everlasting salvation, for the event too plainly proves it was otherwise. But he died with the intention of bringing mankind into a state in which they *may* be saved—as devils may not. . . .

"It is objected again—This makes salvation an uncertainty, depending on free-will in man, which free-will is a mere Arminian fiction.

"Granted that free-will, as Arminians understand it, is a fiction. Yet it must be admitted, that God saves no man, but as they are *themselves willing* to be saved. He worketh in us to *will*. He makes His people *willing* in the day of His power. They who accept, and they who reject this salvation, act alike freely in what they do. Yet is salvation *no uncertainty* as respects the subjects of it; for God applies this salvation to *whom he will*, changing them by effectual grace, from unwilling into willing; and this is the only spring of consent to the Gospel, in any who embrace it.

"It is objected again—If satisfaction has been made for all, how can any perish?

"Because the price was paid and accepted, subject to the condition: 'He that believeth shall be saved;' to which belief all men are called, and of which they are accounted by God capable, and condemned for the want of it, not for want of satisfaction for their sins, as believing.

"Lastly, it is objected—If this be so, what benefit, after all, do men get by this general redemption, seeing that saving faith is God's gift to his elect alone?

"But is this blessing less real, because men turn it into a

curse? What benefit did the bitten Israelite get from the erection of the brazen serpent, if he refused to look at it? None; but who will deny that he had a real blessing vouchsafed to him? Our blessed Saviour (says Archbishop Ussher) by that which He hath performed on His part, hath procured a jubilee for the Sons of Adam, and His Gospel is His trumpet, whereby He doth proclaim liberty to the captives, and preaches the acceptable year of the Lord. If, for all this, some are so well pleased with their captivity that they *desire* no deliverance, that derogates nothing from the *generality* of the freedom announced in the proclamation. If any one say to sin, his old master (Levit. xxv. 24; Exodus, xxi. 5; Deut. xv. 26), I love thee, and will not go out free, he shall be *bored* for a slave, and *serve for ever*. But that slavish disposition of his maketh the extent of his privilege not *a whit the straiter*, because *he* was included in the general grant as well as others, but he was not disposed to benefit by it.

"The freeing of the Jews from the captivity of Babylon, was a type of that great deliverance which the Son of God hath wrought out for us. Cyrus, king of Persia, published his proclamation in this manner: 'Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and *let him go up*.'—2 Chron. xxxvi. 23.

"Now, it is true they alone did follow this proclamation, whose spirit God had raised to go up.—Ezra, i. 5. But could they that remained still in Babylon justly plead that the king's grant was not large enough, or that they were *excluded* from going up by any clause contained therein? . . .

"By our Church this doctrine is clearly defined:

"The offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual.'—31st Article.

“ ‘I learn to believe in God the Son, who hath redeemed me and all mankind.

“ ‘In God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me and all the elect people of God.’—*Church Catechism*.

“Election is connected immediately with sanctification—not with redemption.”

THE END.

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee.

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